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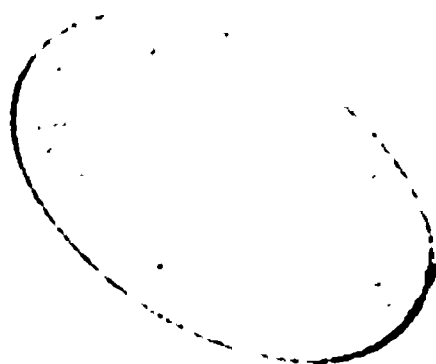
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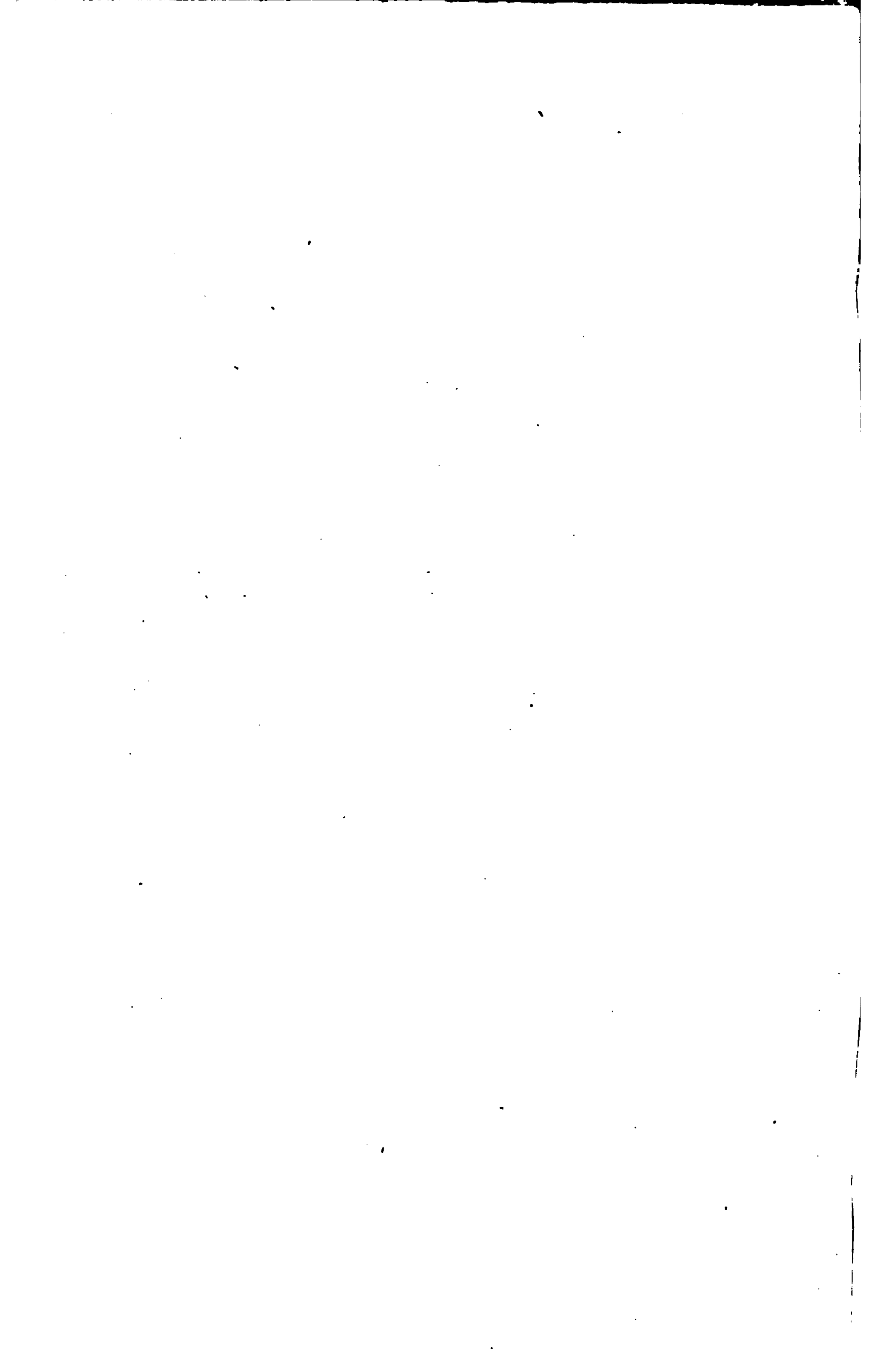
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**HISTORY**  
**OF THE**  
**PENINSULAR WAR.**

**G. WOODFALL, ANGEL COURT, BEKINER STREET, LONDON.**

2-256

**HISTORY**  
**OF THE**  
**PENINSULAR WAR.**

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"Unto thee  
"Let thine own times as an old story be."  
DONNE.

---

**BY ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ. LL.D.**  
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**CYMMRODORION, OF THE MASSACHUSETTS**  
**HISTORICAL SOCIETY, ETC.**

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**MDCCCXXVIII.**



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# HISTORY

## OF THE

# PENINSULAR WAR.

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### CHAPTER XXIV.

SIR A. WELLESLEY ENTERS SPAIN. BATTLE OF  
TALAVERA. RETREAT OF THE BRITISH ARMY.  
DEFEAT OF THE SPANIARDS AT PUENTE DEL  
ARZOBISPO AND ALMONACID.

THE head-quarters of Marshal Victor, after  
he returned from his movement in favour of  
Soult to his former position, were at Truxillo:  
Cuesta was on his left flank, having his head-  
quarters at Fuente del Maestro, and his advance  
at Calemonte on the Guadiana, a league from  
Merida. The British General had formed a  
plan for cutting off the enemy's retreat by a  
movement through Castello Branco and Plasencia  
to the bridge of Almaraz; this he relinquished,  
because it did not coincide with Cuesta's  
opinion, and because he found it impossible to  
prevail upon that general to choose a secure

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*Victor retreats beyond the Tagus.*

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position, or to concentrate his army, which was distributed with so little judgement in an open country, that if Victor had attacked it, an easier victory might have been obtained than that of Medellin. The French have seldom suffered such opportunities to pass, and Sir Arthur was very apprehensive that the army, which had been raised with such exertions, would be dispersed before he could effect a junction with it. But Victor was content to forego this advantage rather than risk the danger of being cut off from Madrid by such an operation as Sir Arthur had meditated; he broke up, therefore, at the beginning of June, and retreated across the Tagus at Almaraz; Cuesta followed, without obtaining any advantage over him in his retreat, and sufficiently fortunate that the French Marshal was in too much fear of a better army, to profit by the want of discipline in the Spaniards and the want of skill in their commander.

*Alburquerque proposed for the command in La Mancha.*

When Sir Arthur had given up his original plan, it was concerted that he should join Cuesta at Badajoz. Victor's retreat rendered this unnecessary; it was then agreed that he should advance, as he had at first proposed, by way of Plasencia. The army of La Mancha at this time, consisting of 16,000 foot and 1300 horse, was under Venegas, subject to Cuesta's orders. This was the side on which the French were most exposed; Alburquerque, by one operation, though it had only partially succeeded, had retarded the plans of the enemy for more than a

month, and, had he not been withheld by the positive orders of men who were unworthy to control him, there is reason for believing that he would have prevented many of the disasters which afterwards occurred. His patriotism was undoubted; no man, indeed, ever more passionately loved his country: his military talents were of the highest promise; and when these moral advantages concurred, his rank and illustrious family ought to have been considered as circumstances to recommend him, giving him, as they would have done, additional claims to the respect of the army and of the nation. With both he was exceedingly popular, especially among the La Manchans; and having been a successful general, almost the only one who had obtained any success, the soldiers had an opinion of his good fortune as well as of his talents. Mr. Frere, who estimated the Duke as he deserved, was exceedingly desirous that he should have the command in La Mancha, and suggested it to Cuesta. "An army," he said, "which had been torn by factions, thrown into confusion by the successive removal of its officers, and discouraged by ill fortune, could have no hope of being speedily re-established and conducted to victory, except by a general who was known to them for his successes, and who was personally popular among them, and in the province wherein he was to act. The Duque de Alburquerque was the only one who united in himself these advantages; and for the situation which

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he at present held, Venegas would not be less useful, having always served under General Cuesta, and not only near his person, but immediately under his eyes." Unhappily Cuesta was jealous of the Duke's popularity; and the Supreme Junta were jealous of his rank and influence. Mr. Frere's advice was rejected, and this may be considered as one cause of the failure of the campaign.

*Plan of detaching a Spanish force toward Segovia.*

It had at first been doubted whether the French would make any thing more than a show of resistance on this side of Madrid; and a plan was proposed for menacing their retreat and the rear of the metropolis, by detaching a considerable Spanish corps through the Puerto de Arenas to Avila, Arevalo, and Segovia. Such a movement, it was thought, would compel the enemy either to retreat, or to detach a force of correspondent magnitude; and thus a material advantage would be afforded to the British army, which, when concentrated, amounted only to 20,000 men. Cuesta had about 38,000, well armed but ill disciplined, and ill clothed also, which, in their state of discipline, was an evil of more consequence than may immediately be obvious. The Intruder, with 9000 of his guards, and the greater part of the garrison of Madrid, had joined Sebastiani in La Mancha, and attempted to bring Venegas to action; finding this in vain, they left 2000 men to defend Toledo, and prepared to bring their whole disposable force, consisting of about 50,000, against

the united Spanish and British armies. But the Spanish army was in such a state, that little could be expected from its co-operation: a smaller force would, under such circumstances, be of greater assistance, as being more manageable and more likely to follow the example and catch the spirit of their better disciplined allies. If, therefore, a large detachment of these troops, by moving toward Segovia, could draw off a body of the French to watch them, they would render more service by such a diversion than could be expected from them in the field. For this reason such a movement was advised both by Sir Arthur and Mr. Frere; that minister not being deterred from the performance of his duty by the clamour raised against him in England, but delivering his opinion to the British general upon the same footing, he said, as he should have done had he been holding a private conversation with Sir Arthur, and as he should equally have ventured to do had he been residing casually in Spain in a private character. There was another reason which made the Junta wish to see Cuesta's army diminished. A suspicion had for some time prevailed that Cuesta had not forgiven his arrest, and that the same temper which led him to those violent measures whereby he had provoked that act of vigour, would tempt him to take some serious vengeance whenever it was in his power. This, it was thought, was more to be apprehended now than at any former time, because the army which his

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*Jealousy entertained of Cuesta.*

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rival, Blake, commanded, had just at this time been shamefully dispersed, and thus the great obstacle to such a project was removed. The Junta were afraid to supersede Cuesta, even if they knew whom to appoint in his place; and they were afraid even to propose this measure of detaching a part of his army, under a commander of sufficient popularity to oppose his designs: but it was not doubted that if such a measure were proposed by the British General as a military plan, they would joyfully accede to it.

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*Sir Arthur  
confers with  
Cuesta.*

Cuesta was wronged by these suspicions; . . he was obstinate, intractable, and unfit for command; but a right honest man, and one who, from a sense of duty as well as from natural courage, would at any time have laid down his life for the service of Spain. Sir Arthur, whose head-quarters were now at Plasencia, went to confer with him at Almaraz. Fourteen thousand of the Spaniards were at this time stationed at the Puente del Arzobispo; the remainder were about two miles from the bridge of Almaraz, encamped under the Pass of Miravete. Victor had taken up a position upon the Alberche, near Talavera. There, Sir Arthur stated his opinion, the enemy ought to be attacked by the united force of the allies; but it would be desirable to detach a corps of 10,000 towards Avila to turn their right: Cuesta approved the proposal, but desired they might be British troops. Sir Arthur replied, that the British

army, to act with advantage, must act in a body; and the Spaniards could better spare such a detachment, being indeed more numerous than was either necessary for the operations on the Alberche, or convenient, considering their state of discipline. These representations were lost upon Cuesta, who estimated his own importance by the numbers under his command; he refused to make any large detachment, but offered to send two battalions of infantry and a few cavalry to join Sir R. Wilson's Portuguese brigade, and march upon Arenas, and thence to Escalona, in communication with the left of the British army. Had Sir Arthur's advice been followed, it was his intention to have recommended Alburquerque to the command; but it was the fate of Spain to be almost always deprived of the services of this brave and able general by the jealousy of meaner minds.

Sir Arthur proposed also that the Spaniards should occupy the passes at Perales and Baños, and thus cut off the communication between Victor and the French forces in the north of Spain. It was neither known what the amount of that force might be, nor where it was distributed, nor in what condition it was: but the march of Mortier with some 15,000 men from Aragon to their assistance had been ascertained, and it was certain therefore that a movement might be apprehended from that quarter. The proposal was received with some ill humour on Cuesta's part, for he was surrounded by in-

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*He requires  
that the  
passes be  
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triguers, some of whom perhaps sought to serve the enemy by embroiling the allies, and others who, having as much national pride as professional ignorance, had as much selfishness as either; these persons had persuaded the hasty old man that Sir Arthur sought to weaken the Spanish army by dividing it, in order to obtain for himself the glory of expelling the French from Madrid, which was now, they represented, within Cuesta's reach. He was prevailed upon however, by his Adjutant-General, O'Donoju, to promise that this should be done; and if the performance fell far short, the detachment being incompetent in force, and almost wholly unprovided, the failure must be imputed to his erring judgement and the disorderly state of the commissariat department, not to any want of faith or perverse purpose on his part.

*Junction of  
the British  
and Spanish  
armies.*

In pursuance of the arrangements at this interview, the British army broke up from Plasencia on the 17th and 18th of July, and formed a junction with Cuesta on the 20th at Oropesa. Sir R. Wilson marched from his position on the Tietar on the 15th, and reached Escalona on the 23d, threatening Madrid on that side, from which he was about eight leagues distant. Venegas had been directed to break up from Madri-lejos at the same time as the British army, march by Tembleque and Ocaña, cross the Tagus by the ford at Fuente Duenas, and advance to Arganda, so to threaten Madrid, which would then be within a few hours' march. Had this

plan been followed, either a considerable body of the French must have been detached against Venegas, or he would have entered the capital without resistance.

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But Sir Arthur was destined throughout the campaign to have his plans continually frustrated by the misconduct of those from whom he looked for cordial co-operation. On the 22d the combined armies moved from Oropesa, and the advance attacked Victor's rear-guard, which was drawn up in order of battle, upon a plain about a league from Talavera. Their right wing was turned by Brigadier General Anson, and Alburquerque attacked them in front, and drove them back. They retreated to a position upon the Alberche, a league beyond the town, and the combined armies advanced, and encamped that night in the vine and olive-yards between the town and the French. Sir Arthur had a narrow escape that day; while he was reconnoitring, a three-pound shot was fired at him with so good an aim, that it cut a bough from a tree close to his head. He determined to attack the enemy the following morning, and bring Victor to action before he should be joined by Sebastiani and the Intruder. Nothing could be more favourable to his views than this unskilful halt of the enemy, an opportunity being thus presented for beating them, as he had hoped, in detail. The columns were formed for this purpose at an early hour, and at five in the morning they received orders to march. But

*Opportunity of attacking the French*

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July.*lost by  
Cuesta's in-  
decision.*

when Cuesta was informed of the determination which had been taken, no arguments could induce him to make up his mind, and give the necessary instructions : at midnight he remained undecided, and the orders therefore were necessarily countermanded, . . not more to the disappointment of the army, than to the sore vexation of the General, who knew the whole importance of the opportunity which had thus been lost. So unaccountable was this conduct in Cuesta, that it has been supposed he scrupled at fighting upon a Sunday. Whatever his reasons were, they have never been explained, and could not have been more valid than this would have been : but thus the fair occasion was let pass ; for when, on the morning of the 24th, he was ready to offer battle, it appeared that Victor, profiting by the precious time which had been given him, had decamped during the night, and retired to St. Olalla, and from thence towards Torrejos, to effect that meditated junction which Sir Arthur's measures would have frustrated.

*Distress of  
the British  
army for  
want of  
transport.*

This retreat surprised Cuesta as much as if his own procrastination had not deprived Spain of the victory which prompt measures would have secured. The British General had foreseen the consequence of so ill-timed a delay, and the disappointment was the more grievous because he could not pursue the French. From the hour in which he entered Spain he had never been able to procure means of transport : . . he required none for the baggage of individuals,

.. only for provisions, ammunition, money, and military stores, things indispensable for an army: and these were not to be obtained. The country was in a state of total disorganization; and what was more extraordinary, the government seemed to be totally ignorant of this, and to suppose that nothing more was required of it than to issue edicts, which would be carried into effect as if things were in their ordinary course. This inconvenience had been so severely felt, that Sir Arthur, before he left Plasencia, informed Cuesta it would be impossible for him to undertake any farther operations after their arrangements against Victor should have been carried into effect, unless the necessary means of transport were supplied. Justice to his Majesty, and to the army with which he had been intrusted, required this determination, he said, and he was equally bound in justice to communicate it to General Cuesta without delay. The means which he required were such as every country in which an army was acting was bound to afford; and if the people of Spain were either unwilling or unable to supply what the British army required, they must do without its services. This declaration had been made as early as the 16th; a week had now elapsed, there had not been the slightest effort to remedy the evil, and from the same cause the troops were now in actual want of provisions. For the Spanish commissariat was in the most deplorable state; and that of the British army, which was far from

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being in a good one, could effect nothing in a country where they exerted no authority themselves, and the government would exert none for them. The evil was aggravated by the junction of two large armies, in a country which had scarcely ever been without troops to exhaust it during the preceding twelve months. When the two combined armies became competitors for food, the inhabitants naturally preferred their own countrymen : . . it was afterwards discovered also, that, with a stupid selfishness, which admits neither of justification or excuse, they concealed the greater part of their stores from both.

*Sir Arthur  
halts.*

Thus painfully circumstanced, Sir Arthur could not proceed. He conceived also that his engagement with Cuesta was fulfilled by the removal of Victor from the Alberche ; for if advantage were duly taken of that movement, it gave the Spanish General possession of the course of the Tagus, and opened the communication with La Mancha and Venegas. He halted from absolute necessity, and he determined even to return to Portugal, if he were not properly supplied. Cuesta appeared fully sensible of the propriety of this determination, and trusting that good fortune would put him in possession of Madrid, which now seemed just within his reach, he, having means of transport in abundance, advanced four leagues in pursuit of Victor, to the village of Bravo ; Sir Arthur, meantime, taking up a position at Talavera, to wait

*Cuesta advances in  
pursuit of  
Victor.*

the issue of a movement which was undertaken against his opinion, moved two divisions of infantry and a brigade of cavalry, under General Sherbrooke, across the Alberche to Casalegas, to keep up the communication with Cuesta and with Sir Robert Wilson. Near that village the body of a Spanish peasant was found, whom the French soldiers had a little before burnt, or rather scorched to death. It lay with the arms lifted and the hands clenched, as if in the act of prayer, the features distorted, and the whole corpse stiffened in one dreadful expression of agony!

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Joseph Buonaparte and Marshal Jourdan left Madrid on the 23d, and halted that night at Navalcarnero, designing to form a junction with Victor at Casalegas, and to order Sebastiani thither as soon as that general, in pursuance of his instructions, should have returned from Consuegra and Madrilejos, where he was watching Venegas, to Toledo. Another object which Jourdan had in view was to check Sir Robert Wilson, whose force he supposed to be considerably greater than it was, and of whose enterprising spirit the French stood in fear. But Victor, who was well informed of the plans of his enemies, perceived, that if he fell back upon Navalcarnero to join the Intruder, it would be easy to interpose between them and Sebastiani, in which case the junction of their whole force in this quarter would be rendered exceedingly difficult, if not impossible. Apprising Joseph, therefore, of his movements, he retreated to the

*Junction of  
Joseph and  
Sebastiani  
with Victor.*

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left bank of the Guadarrama, at its confluence with the Tagus near Toledo. Sebastiani reached that city the same day, and the Intruder, marching to the same point, fixed his head-quarters at Vargas, two leagues distant, so that the whole force which he could bring against the allies was now united. It consisted of 45,000 men, after 3000 were left to defend Toledo. They resolved immediately, now that this great object was effected, to act upon the offensive; and on the next day they began their march to Torrejos.

*Cuesta's  
vanguard  
attacked by  
the French.*

Cuesta had by this time advanced to St. Olalla. He there learnt that Victor had turned off towards Toledo; and so far was he from divining the obvious intent of such a movement, that he supposed the French were in full retreat, and that he had nothing to do but to pursue them. From some strange misconception, too, he supposed the English were about to follow him; they were very short of provisions and means of conveyance, he informed his own government, but he was doing all in his power to persuade them of the necessity of putting themselves in motion. He thus deceived himself and his government, instead of making efforts to supply the wants of the English army, or assisting them with his own means of transport. These he possessed in sufficient quantity; and it was discovered when too late, that food in abundance might have been procured, had proper means been used for obtaining it. In the morning of the 25th Cuesta dispatched intelligence that he

was in pursuit of the French ; in the evening he discovered that he was in some danger of being attacked by them, and on the following day his out-posts were assailed in Torrejos, and driven in. General Zayas advanced with the vanguard to meet the French ; he was attacked by Latour Maubourg, with the French advanced guard, and suffered considerable loss ; but Zayas was a good officer, and maintained his ground against superior numbers while he sent to require support. Alburquerque had requested that his division might be the first to support the vanguard, either in case of its attacking the enemy or being attacked. While Cuesta made arrangements for the retreat of the whole army beyond the Alberche, the Duque advanced time enough to save Zayas from complete rout, and the army from that utter defeat which must necessarily have resulted. The vanguard was flying at the moment when he arrived ; he charged the enemy, checked them, and gave the van time to re-form, and fall back in good order. But for this timely success the army would have been dispersed, for all the artillery and baggage were in the streets of St. Olalla, carts of bread were there also blocking up the way, the commissaries had taken flight, and the men, catching that panic which want of order in an army never fails to occasion on the first approach of danger, had begun to throw away their arms, that they might neither be incumbered with them in running away, nor supposed to be soldiers if they were overtaken.

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July.*Alburquerque saves  
Cuesta  
from defeat.*



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*Cuesta re-  
treats to  
the Al-  
berche.*

*Sir Arthur  
prevails on  
him to cross  
that river.*

Alburquerque would have pursued his success had he not been compelled to retreat by repeated orders from the commander-in-chief, at the moment when he was about to attack a disheartened enemy, with troops confident in their own courage and in the skill of their leader, and heated by the advantage which they had gained. He had, however, done much in saving the army, for never were the movements of an army conducted in a more wretched and disorderly manner; like a rabble upon a pilgrimage, such was Alburquerque's description, they proceeded without any regard to distance, order, or method, and with the whole park of artillery; they had neither provisions, staff, nor settled plan; and they stopped upon their marches to repose like flocks of sheep, without taking up any position, so that, if the French had known the condition they were in, defeat must have been inevitable whenever they were unexpectedly attacked. Saved from that total dispersion which must have ensued, had not Alburquerque thus checked the French in their career, the Spanish army retreated twenty miles from St. Olalla to the Alberche unmolested, thus again forming a junction with the British, and bivouacked on the left bank. At daybreak Sir Arthur crossed, and having with some difficulty penetrated to the old General's tent, found him asleep there, and the army in that state of disorder which is usually consequent upon a forced retreat. He pointed out the necessity of passing the river without loss of time, and taking up his ground

on the right of the British position. Fortunately Cuesta yielded to this advice, although he thought it unlikely that the enemy would venture to attack them: there was a report that they had detached 15,000 men towards Madrid, and this strengthened his opinion. In fact, had Venegas performed his part of the concerted operations, either this must have been done by the French, or Madrid would have fallen. But though this General was under Cuesta's orders, and had been instructed how to act in pursuance of the plan arranged with the British Commander, counter orders were sent him by the Supreme Junta; and he, in consequence, disconcerted the whole arrangement by employing himself in a useless cannonade of Toledo; thus permitting the French to bring their whole force against the allies.

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Sir Arthur, as soon as the Spaniards fell back to the Alberche, expected a general action, and immediately prepared for it, recalling Sherbrooke from Casalegas to his station in the line. The position extended something more than two miles. The British were on the left; there the ground was open, and commanded by a height upon which a division of infantry was stationed under Major-General Hill. Still farther upon the left was a low range of mountains separated from the height by a valley about 300 fathoms wide, and here a ravine running from north to south covered the left and centre of the position, and terminated at the beginning of the olive

*Position of  
the allies in  
front of Ta-  
lavera.*

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grounds on the right. The valley was not occupied, because it was commanded by the height, and because the mountains were thought too distant to be of any consequence in the expected battle. The right, consisting of Spaniards, extended immediately in front of Talavera down to the Tagus: this part of the ground was covered with olive trees, and much intersected by banks and ditches. The high road leading from the town to the bridge of Alberche was defended by a heavy battery in front of the Ermida, or chapel of Nuestra Señora del Prado, which was occupied by Spanish infantry. All the avenues to the town were defended in like manner; the town itself was occupied, and the remainder of the Spanish foot formed in two lines behind the banks, on the road which led to the position of the British. In the centre between the allied armies was a commanding spot, on which the British had begun to construct a redoubt. Brigadier-General Alexander Campbell was posted here with a division of infantry; and General Cotton's brigade of dragoons, with some Spanish cavalry, in the open ground in his rear.

*Sir Arthur  
nearly made  
prisoner.*

When Sherbrooke was recalled from Casalegas, General Mackenzie had been left with a division of infantry and a brigade of horse as an advanced post near Casa de Salinas, in a wood on the right of the Alberche, which covered the left of the British army. About two in the afternoon of the 27th the enemy appeared in strength on

the left bank ; Victor forded the Alberche, and before Mackenzie's division could be withdrawn from the wood on the left, it was attacked by very superior forces under Generals Lapisse and Chaudron Rousseau. Sir Arthur, from a tower immediately in their rear, which he had ascended for the purpose of observation, saw the men falter when about to be attacked by such overpowering numbers, and descending just in time, with difficulty mounted his horse in the midst of the affray, and escaped being made prisoner. Had he been taken at that moment, or had Marlborough, a century before, been recognised and detained when he fell into the hands of a French partisan on the Meuse, how differently would the latter days of Buonaparte and of Louis XIV. have closed, and how different at this hour would have been the condition of England, of Europe, and of the world ! The British suffered considerably, but they withdrew in perfect order, and took their place in the line. Meantime the other divisions of the French crossed, and advanced within cannon-shot of the allied army. They cannonaded the left of the British position, and they attacked the Spanish infantry with their horse, hoping to break through and win the town ; but they were bravely withstood and finally repulsed. The action ceased a little before nine at night. A little before eleven the first line of the Spanish left opened a tremendous fire ; Sir Arthur, who was near the spot, observed that the fire was

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admirably well kept up, and hoped they would do as well next day ; but as he suspected that at that moment there was nothing to fire at, he wished to stop it. While he was speaking, three battalions of Spaniards, alarmed at their own noise, gave way, and fairly took to their heels. The vacancy was promptly filled up ; and these very men the next day bore their full share of the battle, and behaved as steadily as the best troops could have done. Victor had marked the height on which General Hill was posted ; he considered it to be the key of the position, and thought that, if he could beat the English from thence, it would be impossible for them to maintain the field afterwards. This might best be done during the night. He therefore ordered Ruffin to attack the hill with three regiments, Vilatte to support him, and Lapisse to make a feint upon the centre of the allied armies, which might serve as a diversion. The attack was made soon after night had closed ; for a moment it was successful, and they got possession of the height. General Hill instantly attacked them with the bayonet, and recovered the post. At midnight the attempt was repeated, and failed again. According to the French account, one of the regiments destined for this service lost its way, owing to the darkness, and another was impeded by the ravine. Both sides suffered considerably at this well-contested point. The armies lay upon the field, the cavalry with their bridles round their arms ; but there was

little rest during the night ; both sides were on the alert and alarm, and in different parts of the field the videttes of each army were sometimes fired on by their own countrymen, being mistaken for enemies. Whole battalions of the enemy got into the English line, some crying that they were Spaniards, some that they were German deserters : the trick was soon discovered, and, in the reception which they met with, it is not unlikely that many a poor German, who really intended to desert, lost his life. These night-engagements were carried on with the most determined fury ; the men, after they had discharged their muskets, frequently closed, and fought with the butt-end.

The French had ascertained, in the course of the evening, that any attack upon the town, posted as the Spaniards were, was hopeless ; that the centre also was very strong, both from the rugged ground and the olive-yards which covered it, and the works which had been thrown up there. The left was the most practicable point of attack, and the difficulty of carrying that they had severely experienced. There, however, they made a third attempt at day-break, with three regiments under General Ruffin advancing in close columns. They proceeded triumphantly, as they supposed, nearly to the summit ; when they were again charged and again beaten back, but they fell back in good order. Sir Arthur, for the better security of this post, now sent two brigades of horse into

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the valley on the left. Alburquerque had at this time been ordered by the Spanish commander to go with his cavalry to a place near the town, where it was impossible for them to act, and there was not even room for them, the ground being thickly wooded. On this occasion he ventured to act from his own judgement; observing that the English cavalry were charged by very superior numbers, he hastened to support them, and his opportune arrival enabled them to occupy the position. Cuesta perceived the advantage of this movement, and suffered the Duke to choose his own ground, who accordingly took the post of danger with the English horse. To annoy this body, the French sent their riflemen to the heights on the left of the valley; thus occupying the ground which Sir Arthur had supposed beyond the bounds to which the action would extend. It proved of no advantage to them; for Cuesta, marking the movement, dispatched Camp-marshal Bassecourt against them with the fifth division of Spanish infantry, and dislodged them with great loss.

About eleven, the enemy having been baffled in all their attempts, intermitted the attack, rested their troops, and, it is said, cooked their dinners upon the field. Wine and a little bread were served out to the British troops. A brook which flows into the Tagus separated the French and English in one part of the field, and during this pause men of both armies went there to drink, as if a truce had been established. Their

muskets were laid down and their helmets put off while they stooped to the stream, and when they had quenched their thirst, they rested on the brink, looking at each other. The heat and exasperation of battle were suspended ; they felt that mutual respect which proofs of mutual courage had inspired, and some of them shook hands across the brook, in token that although they were met to shed each other's blood, brave men knew how to value a brave enemy. At such a moment it was natural for Englishmen to have no other feeling ; . . the atrocities by which Buonaparte's soldiers in the Peninsula had disgraced their profession, their country, and their nature, were for the time forgotten. This interval also was taken for bringing off the wounded who lay intermingled as they had fallen. And here also a redeeming sense of humanity was manifested ; all hostility being suspended among those who were thus employed, and each striving who should with most alacrity assist the other in extricating the common sufferers. About noon Victor ordered a general attack along the whole line. His own three divisions were to attack the hill once more. Sebastiani was to form his first division in two lines on the left of Lapisse ; Leval, with a brigade just then arriving from Aranjuez, to be stationed to the left of this division, a little in the rear ; still further left, Milhaud, with his dragoons, was to observe Talavera ; Latour Maubourg's infantry and Merlin's light-horse formed in the rear of

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Victor to support his corps, and advance into the open ground now occupied by him, as soon as he should have won the hill. The reserve was placed in a third line behind Sebastiani's corps.

From the moment this general attack commenced, the firing of musketry was heard on all sides like the roll of a drum, with scarcely a moment's interruption during the remainder of the day, the deeper sound of a heavy cannonade rising above it like thunder. The operations of the French were deranged by a blunder of Leval's division, which they attribute to the ruggedness of the ground, and the impossibility of preserving the line among the olive-trees and vines. Instead of forming in *echelon* in the rear, it advanced to the front, and before it had finished deploying it was attacked. Sebastiani sent a brigade to its support, and it fell back to the ground which it was designed to occupy. This occasioned some delay. When the line was formed, Sebastiani waited till Victor had begun the attack. Lapisse first crossed the ravine, supported by Latour Maubourg's cavalry, and by two batteries, each of eight pieces of cannon. Vilatte threatened the hills and covered the valley, and Ruffin, skirting the great chain of mountains to the left, endeavoured to turn the flank of the British army. The attack upon the hill was exceedingly formidable, but, like all the former, it failed. Lapisse was mortally wounded, his men were driven back, and Victor himself

rallied them, and brought them once more to the contested point ; their retrograde movement had exposed Sebastiani's right, and there also the French suffered considerably.

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While Victor led his troops once more to the foot of that hill which had so often been fatal to the assailants, Vilatte with the columns in the valley advanced to his support. General Anson's brigade, consisting of the 1st German light dragoons and the 23d dragoons, with General Fane's heavy cavalry, were ordered to charge them. The French formed in two solid squares ; they were protected by a deep ravine, which was not perceived till the horses were close to it ; and they kept up a tremendous fire of artillery and musketry. This was the most destructive part of the whole action ; numbers of men and horse fell into the ravine, . . numbers were mown down. But the portion which got over were collected as well as he could by the Honourable Major Ponsonby, and led upon the bayonets of the enemy. They passed between two columns of infantry, against which they could effect nothing, then galloped upon the regiment of chasseurs which supported them. Here they were charged by some regiments in reserve, surrounded, broken, dispersed, and almost destroyed, losing two-thirds of their number. The rest (Lord William Russell was among them) passed through the intervals of the French columns, and retired within their own lines. Injudicious and unfortunate as the charge was, the desperate courage with which

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officers and men had advanced upon almost certain destruction astonished the enemy ; it put an end to their efforts on that side, and no further attempt was made upon the hill, which was now covered with dead, dying, wounded, and exhausted troops.

The attack upon the centre was made at the same time. General Campbell was supported by Eguia and Henestrosa, and by a regiment of Spanish horse ; the allies repulsed the enemy, and while the Spaniards turned their flank, the English took their cannon. A column, chiefly consisting of Germans, advanced with excellent steadiness through a heavy fire of artillery, like men who, having obtained the highest military character, were resolved to keep it. They were received by Lieutenant-General Sherbrooke's men with a volley of musketry which staggered them ; the whole British division then rushed forward with the bayonet, and by that irresistible charge the enemy were driven back with great slaughter. But the brigade of Guards advanced too far in pursuit ; they were attacked by the French reserve, they were cut down by a close fire of artillery from a wood ; in a few minutes all their mounted officers were killed, with more than 500 men, and at that moment the fate of the day appeared worse than doubtful. But Sir Arthur's foresight secured the victory which had been so long contested. Seeing the advance, and apprehending the consequence, he moved a battalion of the 48th from the heights

to their support ; and this timely succour, with the assistance of the second line of General Cotton's cavalry, saved the brigade from that total destruction which must else have been inevitable. The broken Guards passed through the intervals of the 48th, re-formed behind it, and then in their turn supported the regiment which had preserved them. Upon their advance, the enemy, whose heart now failed them, retired : the Guards renewed the huzzas with which they had advanced, and the cry was taken up along the whole line. It was the shout of victory on the part of the allies ; for though the light troops continued to fire, and from time to time a heavy cannonade was renewed, the enemy made no further attempt.

A circumstance more horrid than unfrequent in war occurred toward the close of the action ; the long dry grass took fire, and many of the wounded were scorched to death. It was night before the battle ended, and the allies were far from certain that it would not be renewed on the morrow. The moon rose dimly, the night was chill and damp because of the heavy dew ; the troops lay in position on the ground, without covering, and without food ; even water was scarce ; but the officers and the generals were faring alike, and neither murmuring was heard for their privations, nor apprehension felt for what the morrow might bring forth. The French had made large fires along the whole front of their line. At daylight the troops were under arms,

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and in order of battle, . . . but the enemy had disappeared, a rear-guard only being in sight on the left of the Alberche. The Intruder had been a spectator of the whole action. During the night contradictory reports were brought him, some affirming that another attack must ensure the victory, others that Victor's right had been turned, and he could not possibly keep his ground. In this dilemma Joseph sent to ascertain which was the true report, and retired to rest, in expectation of having the favourable one confirmed, the reserve bivouacking round him. At daybreak he was awakened by Sebastiani, who had fallen back with his corps upon the reserve during the night, and who came with tidings that he had been compelled to make this retrograde movement, because Victor was retreating along the foot of the hills to Casalegas. This intelligence left no time for deliberation. The Intruder began to retreat also, but in perfect order ; Milhaud's division formed the rear, and Latour Maubourg brought off many of the wounded. Twenty pieces of cannon were taken by the conquerors ; the prisoners were not many.

Our loss had been very heavy ; 801 killed, 3913 wounded, 653 missing. The Spaniards had 1250 killed and wounded. Generals Mackenzie and Langworth fell. Two bullets passed through Sir Arthur's clothes, and he received a severe contusion on the shoulder from a spent musket-ball. During the second action no attack was made upon the main body of Cuesta's army ;

the position was too strong, and the French rightly judged, that if, by bringing their whole force to bear upon the English, they could defeat them, Cuesta's discomfiture must necessarily follow. On this day, therefore, they were in the proportion of more than two to one to the troops whom they engaged. The British entered the field 18,300 effective men; they were opposed to not less than 48,000. The presence of the Spaniards was of vital importance, by the security which they afforded to the right of our army; and essential service was afforded by those who came into action on the second day, especially by Alburquerque and Bassecourt, and by two battalions under Brigadier-General Whittingham, in their service, who came forward to support the Guards; but the brunt of the battle was borne by the British, as the loss which they sustained evinces. From their loss that of the defeated enemy might fairly be computed, if the numbers left upon the field had not afforded surer ground. Both Spaniards and English state it at not less than 10,000 men; the number of their dead was so great, that Cuesta ordered out his troops by battalions to burn them.

The Spaniards, where they were well commanded, behaved well; but melancholy proofs were given of the inefficient state of their armies. The whole of their commissariat took flight as soon as the action began, with all the people belonging to them; so that after the battle the allies found themselves in total want of food

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*Cuesta decimates  
some of his  
troops.*

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and resources. Three or four corps threw down their muskets without having once discharged them, and dispersed; some of them plundered the baggage. Cuesta was so indignant at this, that after the action he ordered the division to be decimated, and it was only after much entreaty from the British Commander that he consented to re-decimate those on whom the lot had fallen, and six officers and some thirty men were actually executed. Sir Arthur remarked upon this occasion, with equal humanity and wisdom, that fear of disgrace would affect the Spaniards more than fear of death, and that for this reason, among others, exertions ought to be made for clothing them in uniform. Marching to battle as they did, without any thing to distinguish them for soldiers, in the first panic they threw away their arms and accoutrements, and pretended to be peasants. Men dressed as soldiers could not thus at once put off the marks of their profession, and that being the case, they would feel that their safety depended upon keeping their arms and standing their ground; and when the whole army was uniformly clothed, it would be easy to deprive the soldier who should misbehave of a part of his uniform, or to fix upon him some mark of disgrace,—a mode of punishment, he said, the most effectual as well as the most humane. Cuesta had just experienced the good effect of such measures; the regiments whom he deprived of one of their pistols for miscon-

duct at the battle of Medellin, behaved so well from that time, and exerted themselves so strenuously on all occasions to wipe off their disgrace, that, after the battle of Talavera, the pistol was restored to them.

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The wounded of both armies were brought in promiscuously, and many of them laid in the streets and in the squares till shelter could be allotted for them: even for this inevitable necessity no order having been taken by the Spanish authorities. It is worthy of notice, that a greater proportion recovered of those who were left a night upon the field, than of such as were earlier housed, and this is explained by the effect of the free air in preventing fever. Needful accommodations for these poor creatures were not to be found in a city which the French had visited. They had destroyed the public buildings, overturned the altars, and opened the tombs. Furniture of every kind they had carried off to their camp, and what they had no other use for, they had consumed as fuel. Frenchmen like, they had a theatre in their camp. The soldiers' huts were so remarkable for neatness and regularity, as to be an object of curiosity to the British officers; but it was remarked as one proof of the wanton destruction caused by the Intruder's armies, that they were all thatched with unthreshed straw. It ought to be mentioned as a contrast to this, that when the British troops halted by day or

*State of  
Talavera.*



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*Movements  
of Sir R.  
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night amid olive-groves, they were not allowed to cut the trees either for fuel or for shelter.

The day after the action a light brigade, 3000 strong, and a troop of horse-artillery, under Brigadier-General Craufurd, arrived from Lisbon to reinforce the British army, which thus found itself nearly as strong as before the action. But a battle so well contested, and so gloriously won, was rendered of no avail, by the complicated misconduct of the Spanish government and of the Spanish general. The same want of provisions and of the means of transport, which had compelled Sir Arthur to halt at Talavera, prevented him from pursuing his victory. The Intruder, ignorant of this, trembled for Madrid, expecting every hour to hear that Venegas, Sir R. Wilson, and the combined forces were marching upon that city, where the people were looking out for their deliverers. Sir Robert had proceeded with his corps to Navalcarneiro, notwithstanding the immediate neighbourhood of the enemy's army. The detachment reached the Guadarrama: he had established a communication with Madrid, Belliard was preparing to withdraw from the city into the Retiro, which had been fortified as a citadel, and Sir Robert had made arrangements for entering the metropolis on the night of that very day when he and his corps were recalled, because a general action was expected. Some insurrectionary movements had already appeared, which Belliard

had been able to suppress; but it was certain that the moment an army came to the assistance of the citizens, he would no longer be able to keep them down. Joseph's hope, therefore, was from an attack upon the rear of the allies, to be made by the collected forces of Soult, Ney, and Mortier, under command of the former.

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Soult, after his retreat from Galicia, occupied Zamora, Salamanca, and Leon, with the remains of his army, which he had found means to re-equip. Ney's corps was quartered at Astorga, Benevente, and Leon; Mortier's at Medina del Campo, and Valladolid. Apprised of the movements of the English, Soult gave orders on the 20th for collecting the whole at Salamanca, and four days afterwards was instructed by Jourdan, in the Intruder's name, to advance as speedily as possible upon the rear of the enemy by way of Plasencia. Sir Arthur, from the commencement of the campaign, was aware of the existence of this force in the north, and the manner in which it would attempt to act. His own army was so small, that it was not possible for him to spare detachments for securing the passes of the long mountain-ridge which the French must cross. But Cuesta had sent the Marquess de la Reyna, with two battalions from his own army and two from Bejar, to occupy the Puerto de Baños, and given orders to the Duque del Parque to secure the Puerto de Perales, by detachments from Ciudad Rodrigo. The former point Sir Arthur considered safe; but, doubting

*Movements  
of Soult,  
Ney, and  
Mortier.*

*Cuesta ne-  
glects to se-  
cure the  
passes.*

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*Intelligence  
of Soult's  
advance.*

the Duque's power to spare a sufficient force for the latter, he directed Beresford, with the Portuguese troops, to defend this pass, as the greatest service which, in their then state of discipline, they were capable of performing.

Two days after the battle, intelligence was brought to Talavera that 12,000 rations had been ordered at Fuente Duenas for the 28th, and 24,000 at Los Santos on the same day, for a French army, which it was supposed was on its march to the Puerto de Baños. Cuesta upon this discovered some anxiety respecting that post, and proposed that Sir R. Wilson with his corps should be sent thither. This could not be assented to, for his corps was stationed in the mountains towards Escalona, still keeping up a communication with the people of Madrid, . . an advantage too important to be foregone. Of this Cuesta appeared sensible ; yet he could not be prevailed upon to send a detachment from his own army ; and Sir Arthur, considering that they had no other grounds for believing this was the point which was threatened than that the rations were ordered, which might be a feint, and hoping too that the troops already there might prove sufficient, and even that the news of his late victory might deter the French from proceeding, did not press the Spanish general further that day. Night brought with it the anxious feeling that a point had now become of prime importance, concerning which he could not be satisfied that proper means had been

taken for its defence; and in the morning he again pressed Cuesta upon the subject, urging him to detach thither a division of infantry, with its guns, and a commanding officer on whom he could rely. "Certainly," he declared, "he never would have advanced so far, if reason had not been given him to believe that pass was secure. The division would not be missed at Talavera; if it arrived in time it would perform a service of the greatest moment; and even if the enemy should have crossed the mountains before its arrival, it would then be in a situation to observe him." But Cuesta was not to be persuaded. That day and the following elapsed; on the third came tidings that the French had entered Bejar; and then the Spanish general dispatched Bassecourt with a force which might have sufficed had it been sent in time.

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Mortier began his march from Salamanca on the 27th, Soult followed on the 30th, Ney two days afterwards, all taking the same route. The advance fell in with the Marquess de la Reyna's out-posts at La Calzala, and pursued them to Bejar and Col de Baños. The two battalions on which Cuesta had relied before the appearance of danger, consisted of only 600 men, supplied with twenty rounds of ammunition! Even this was more than they employed; they attempted to blow up the bridge called Cuesper de Hombre, and failing in that, retired without firing a shot. The battalions of Bejar dispersed

*Soult occupies Plasencia.*

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as soon as they saw the enemy. Yet such was the strength of this position, that the very sight of the Spaniards delayed Mortier's march, in consequence of the dispositions which he thought it necessary to make for forcing it if it had been defended, and he did not enter Plasencia till the first of August. The occupation of that place was of the greatest importance; the French had now intercepted sir Arthur's communication with Portugal, and were enabled to manœuvre upon his rear if he advanced toward Madrid, or remained at Talavera.

*Sir Arthur  
marches a-  
gainst him.*

Cuesta now proposed that half the British army should march against Soult, while the other half maintained the post at Talavera. Sir Arthur said he was ready either to go or stay with the whole British army, but he would not divide it; the choice was left to him, and he preferred going, thinking his own troops were most likely to accomplish the object of the march, perhaps even without a contest. It appears that he was not aware of the enemy's force: Cuesta estimated it at twelve or fourteen thousand, and Sir Arthur did not at that time suppose it to be larger. He preferred the alternative of going for another reason also, feeling it of more importance to him that the communication through Plasencia should be opened than it was to the Spaniards, though highly important to them also. The movements of Victor in front induced him to suppose that the enemy, despairing of any better success at Talavera than they had already

experienced, intended to fall upon Sir R. Wilson, and force a passage by Escalona : thus to act in concert with Soult between the Alberche and the Tietar. Sir Robert also felt himself seriously menaced, and some letters which he intercepted gave him sufficient information to ascertain that these were the plans of the enemy ; he therefore informed the British General that he should remove his artillery to St. Roman, occupy the Panada with 300 men, a strong height behind Montillo with 600 more, from whence there was a good retreat to St. Valuela, and return with the rest to a position, in readiness either to occupy Valuela, or obey such instructions as he might receive. In this state of things, Sir Arthur perceived how possible it was that Cuesta might be forced to quit Talavera before he could return to it, and this made him uneasy for his hospital. At all events, he thought it too far advanced. He therefore entreated Cuesta to make a requisition for carts, and remove the wounded as expeditiously as was consistent with their safety, by first sending them to an intermediate station at no great distance, from whence they might gradually be passed to the place which should ultimately be fixed upon. He wrote to Bassecourt, requesting that he, with that division which had been dispatched to secure the passes after they had been lost, would halt at Centiello, and watch the vale of Plasencia ; and he again recommended to the Spanish commander, that Venegas should be ordered to threaten Madrid

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*Cuesta de-  
termines to  
follow Sir  
Arthur.*

by the road of Arganda, that being the only means whereby it was possible to alarm the enemy, and make him divide his forces.

Having thus taken every precaution, he marched to Oropesa, with the intention of either compelling Soult to retreat, or giving him battle. At five in the evening he learned that the enemy were at Naval Moral, not more than eighteen miles distant; thus having placed themselves between him and the bridge of Almaraz, as if they meant to cut off his retreat across the Tagus. An hour afterwards dispatches came from Talavera, inclosing an intercepted letter from Jourdan to Soult, wherein the latter was told that the British army was at least 25,000 strong, and yet he was ordered to bring it to action wherever he could find it; from this Cuesta inferred that Soult could not have less than 30,000 men, and this was the precise number at which the friar, on whom the letter had been found, stated his army. But the most grievous part of the intelligence was, that Victor was again advancing, and had reached St. Olalla, and that Cuesta, seeing himself threatened both in front and in flank, and apprehending the British would require assistance, was determined to march and join them. Painful as it was thus to abandon the wounded, he considered that he must have abandoned them if he were driven from the position, and that position being now open on the left, he did not think himself able to maintain it. Sir Arthur immediately wrote

to represent that the danger was far less imminent than Cuesta apprehended; the enemy, he thought, were not likely to attack Talavera, nor to occupy the British long. It would be time to march when they knew that the French had forced their way at Escalona, or were breaking up from St. Olalla. Victor was certainly alone, and Sebastiani and the Intruder occupied by Venegas. At all events he urged him to delay his march till the next day, send off his commissariat and baggage before him, and halt in the woods till the wounded were arrived at the bridge of Arzobispo. Soult's force, he said, was certainly overrated.

Sir Arthur's mistake upon this subject arose from his being ignorant that Mortier had formed a junction with this army. He supposed that it consisted only of the corps of Soult and Ney, who had brought out of Galicia 18,000 men, the remains of 36,000 with which they entered that country. Cuesta, however, was better informed; and he himself altered his opinion of the enemy's force when he considered the positive orders which the Intruder had given for attacking the British army, supposing it to consist of 25,000 men. Cuesta had not asked Sir Arthur's advice, and did not wait to receive it: he left Talavera before it reached him, marched all night, and joined the British at Oropesa soon after daylight on the 4th. His apprehension of danger to himself was well founded: it was not without great exertions and heavy loss that the

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*Cuesta  
joins the  
British.*



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treat across  
the Tagus.*

combined armies had repulsed the French at Talavera ; well, therefore, might he despair of withstanding them alone if they returned to the attack. But the danger which by this hasty retreat he averted from himself, he brought upon Venegas and Sir Arthur ; and the latter, in addition to the mortification of having his wounded fall into the hands of the enemy, saw himself exposed to an attack in front and in rear at the same time by two armies, each superior to his own. It was absolutely necessary to retreat, otherwise nothing but two victories could extricate the troops from their perilous situation, and they were little capable of extraordinary exertions, not having had their full allowance of provisions for several days. The bridge of Almaraz had been destroyed, and when the Marquess de la Reyna abandoned his post at the pass, he made for this point, with the intention of removing the bridge of boats that had been placed there ; the boats indeed might be still in the river, but it was thought impossible to reach Almaraz without a battle. If he moved on to give the enemy battle, the French from Talavera would break down the bridge of Arzobispo, and thus intercept the only way by which a retreat was practicable ; the same danger would be incurred if he took a position at Oropesa. Nothing remained, therefore, but to cross at Arzobispo, while it was yet in his power, and take up a defensive post upon the Tagus : the sooner a defensive line should be taken, the more

likely were the troops to be able to defend it. On the day, therefore, that Cuesta formed his unfortunate junction, Sir Arthur retreated by this route, and crossed. Cuesta followed on the night of the 5th.

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Sir Arthur had left Colonel Mackinnon in command at Talavera with the charge of the sick and wounded, amounting, with those attached to the hospital, to about 5000 persons. On the evening of one day the charge had been given him, and on the next at noon Cuesta informed him that Soult was at Plasencia with 30,000 men, and that Victor was in his front, only six leagues distant; the monk who discovered their plans, being the bearer of a letter from the Intruder to Soult, was in the room: it was his intention to retire at dusk with the Spanish army and join Sir Arthur, and the hospital had better be got off before that time. Colonel Mackinnon had been instructed, in case of such necessity, to make for Merida by way of the Puente del Arzobispo: but it was with difficulty he could procure from Cuesta seven waggons to remove a few of the wounded. There was no alternative but to recommend those whom there was no possibility of removing to the honour and humanity of the French commanders; and Colonel Mackinnon, who had lived in France, and was in every respect one of the most accomplished officers in the British army, did this in a manner which was believed to have had great effect in obtaining for them the humane and

*Col. Mackinnon removes some of the wounded.*

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honourable treatment they received. All who were able to march were ordered to assemble at three that afternoon, and proceed to Calera that night, . . a town which the French had completely destroyed. The next day they were overtaken at Arzobispo by the British army, and instead of passing the night there, as had been intended, were ordered to proceed. Forty bullock-cars were added to their means of transport, but in such ill repair for some of the worst roads in the world, that only eleven of them reached Deleitosa. A more difficult six days' march could hardly be conceived, and the difficulty was of a kind more trying to a brave and feeling mind than danger. There was only a commissary's clerk to provide for them, and the runaway Spaniards were plundering the small magazines in all the villages. Reports that the French had crossed the Tagus, and were in their front, alarmed his men, who were in no condition for the field, and many of them took to the mountains. Mackinnon mustered his force in a convent near Deleitosa; it consisted then of 2000 men, and these he conducted to Elvas, without magazines, with no assistance from the magistrates, who, on the contrary, sometimes evinced a hostile disposition; and with such want of humanity on the part of the people (made callous by selfishness, and selfish by necessity), that he was often obliged to use violent means, or the men must have been starved.

The British army was now stationed at Deleitosa, whence they could defend the point of Almaraz and the lower parts of the Tagus. Cuesta remained at Arzobispo; but so little in concert with Sir Arthur, that he moved his headquarters, and suffered three days to elapse without sending him any information of his plans or movements. On the night of the 7th, he removed to Peraleda de Garbin, leaving two divisions of infantry and Alburquerque's division of cavalry to defend the passage of the river. This was an imprudent measure, for the enemy were in force on the left bank; they had already attempted to win the bridge, and were now erecting batteries. The bridge was barricaded, and defended by several batteries with embrasures connected by a covered way, and upon these works the general relied with such confidence, that he thought he might safely withdraw the greater part of his army to more convenient quarters. Cuesta ought to have understood the nature of this post; he had been blamed for abandoning it in the former part of the year: satisfied, however, with having fortified the bridge, he never thought of examining whether the river might not be fordable. Mortier, who commanded the corps of the French which led the pursuit, erected batteries to call off the attention of the Spaniards, while he ordered the chief of his staff, Dombrowsky, with two good swimmers, to sound the Tagus. His officer of engineers had observed, that when the Spanish

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the Spaniards at  
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de M. Soult,  
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horse were brought to drink they went some way into the river ; trial was made where this indication promised some hope of success, and a good ford, passable even for infantry; was found there, not two hundred yards above the bridge and the Spanish batteries. Soult, who had now come up, resolved to effect the passage in the heat of the day, when the Spaniards would be taking their mid-day sleep, and might be surprised. He calculated upon a carelessness which he was sure to find. The Spaniards relied upon the river for their defence, never having deemed it needful to ascertain how far it might be relied on: the passage was accomplished almost as soon as they were aware of the attempt ; the works of the bridge were taken in the rear, some of the Spanish artillerymen were cut down at their guns, and others, in a manner not to be justified by any laws of war, were compelled to turn them upon their countrymen ; the works were presently demolished, and the way opened for Girard's infantry. Alburquerque's cavalry were reposing under some trees, a short league from the scene of action ; at the first alarm they hastened to support their countrymen ; and their charge was made with such resolution and effect, that Soult is said to have thought of firing grape upon them through his own men, as the only means of repelling them. But succours came to the French in time for preventing this atrocious expedient ; and the Spaniards, horse and foot alike, retreated, or rather fled through a moun-

tainous country, which favoured their escape, leaving their ammunition, their baggage, and the whole of their artillery. The slain were estimated by the French at 1600 men, most of whom were cut down in a pursuit from which the enemy returned with every man his sabre red with blood. Some of the French were drowned in the passage, their other loss was trifling. The same frightful circumstance as at Talavera occurred after the action; the herbage took fire; the wind spread the flames far and wide, among stubble, dry shrubs, and groves of ilex and of olives; . . . on all sides the cries of the wounded were heard; and through the night muskets, which the fugitives had thrown away, went off, cartridges took fire, and cassoons of artillery exploded.

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The commonest precaution might have saved the Spaniards from this defeat, in which, though the loss of men was not great, that of artillery and ammunition was considerable, and the moral effect upon the troops of more importance than either. It seems, indeed, that Soult advanced to Arzobispo in the sole hope of profiting by the negligence of the Spanish commanders to strike some such blow; for the enemy had no intention at this time of carrying the war into Extremadura, finding Almaraz too well defended, and the fords, which were said to exist below the bridge, impassable. Ney had formed the design of crossing them, and taking possession of the defiles of Deleitosa and Xaraicejo, thus to cut

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off the retreat of the English toward Portugal ; but those points were secured by Sir Arthur, as well as the passage of the river, and the French Marshal was ordered back to Salamanca to secure that part of the country, in concert with Kellermann, against the Duque del Parque and the Conde de Noroña, who had been prevented from occupying the enemy on that side for want of artillery and cavalry ; the former, however, was now beginning to act on the offensive. Ney began his march on the 9th to the Puerto de Baños, in his way towards Old Castille ; and this brought him in contact with Sir Robert Wilson.

*Action with  
Sir R. Wilson  
at the  
Puerto de  
Baños.*

When the British commander left Talavera, Cuesta's advanced guard was in communication with Sir Robert, and that officer was informed of the intended retreat of the Spaniards, that he might in like manner fall back. But he was advanced too far for this to be practicable ; after a long march through the mountains, he found himself, on the night of the 14th, six leagues from Arzobispo ; the high road between Oropesa and Talavera was to be crossed, and Victor was in possession of Talavera ; thinking it, therefore, too late to reach Arzobispo, he determined to move by Puerto de San Julien and Centinello, and cross the Tietar toward the mountains. On the 11th he reached Baños, and had set out the following morning on the road of Grenadilla, to restore by this route his communication with the allied armies, when a cloud of dust was perceived on the road of Plasencia,

and a peasant assured him it proceeded from a body of the enemy. Readily believing what was so probable, he turned back, and took post in front of Baños, placing 200 Spanish infantry under Colonel Grant in advance of Aldea Nueva. The enemy's chasseurs and voltigeurs advanced in considerable bodies under General Lorset; and Grant, after a resistance in which the Spaniards demeaned themselves gallantly, was compelled to fall back. The French then attempted to cut off Sir Robert's own legion, which was posted between Aldea Nueva and Baños: he had strengthened his position by every means which the time allowed, so that they could only advance gradually, and with severe loss from the fire of musketry which was kept up upon them. At length part of the Merida battalion on the right gave way, and a road was thus left open by which the position might have been turned. Then Sir Robert ordered a retreat upon the heights above Baños, and from thence sent to secure the road of Monte Mayor, which turned the Puerto de Baños, a league in the rear, and by which the French were directing a column. Don Carlos d'Espagna came up at this time with his battalion of light infantry, took post along the heights commanding the road to Baños, and enabled Sir Robert to detach a party to the mountain on the left, commanding the main road. On the Extremadura side this Puerto is not a pass of such strength as on the side of Castille. Sir Robert had no artillery, and the

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French were not less than treble the number of his troops; nevertheless he maintained his ground for nine hours. At six in the evening, three columns of the enemy succeeded in gaining the height on the left; his post was then no longer tenable, and he retired along the mountains, leaving open the main road, along which a considerable column of cavalry immediately hastened. It came in sight of the battalion of Seville, which had been left at Bejar with orders to follow on the morrow; but when Sir Robert was obliged to retire, and the action commenced, he ordered it to the pass to watch the Monte Mayor road and the heights on the rear of his left. As soon as the French cavalry came nigh, an officer with some dragoons rode on, and called out to the Spanish commanders to surrender. They were answered by a volley that killed the whole party; the Spaniards then began to mount the heights; they were attacked and surrounded by two bodies, one of horse, the other of foot; but they succeeded in cutting their way through, and Ney, having forced the pass, hastened on to Salamanca. Sir Robert's loss was not considerable, and after halting two days at Miranda de Castañas, to rest his men, and collect those who were dispersed, he proceeded on his way.

*The French  
enter Talavera.*

The retreat of Cuesta from Talavera, however much both the former and subsequent conduct of that general may deserve censure, was, under his circumstances, at least an excusable measure. About 1500 of the wounded were left, whom

there was no time to remove ; most of whom, indeed, were not in a state to bear removal. Cuesta had hardly begun his march before the French were in sight. When Victor entered the town, he found some of the wounded, French and English alike, lying on the ground in the Plaza. After complimenting the English, and observing that they understood the laws and courtesies of war, he told them there was one thing which they did not understand, and that was how to deal with the Spaniards. He then sent soldiers to every house, with orders to the inhabitants immediately to receive and accommodate the wounded of the two nations, who were lodged together, one English and one Frenchman; and he expressly directed that the Englishman should always be served first. Many had already died in the square, and the stones were covered with blood; Victor ordered the townsmen to come with spades and besoms, remove and bury the dead, and cleanse the Plaza; he was speedily obeyed, and then the French said the place was fit for them to walk in. This was done a few hours after they entered the town. The next day the troops were assembled at noon, and liberty of pillaging for three hours was allowed them. Every man was provided with a hammer and a small saw for this purpose in his knapsack; and they filed off by beat of drum in regular parties to the different quarters of the town upon this work, as a business with which they were well acquainted,

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*August.**Victor behaves well to the English wounded.*

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*August.*

Nothing escaped their search: they discovered corn enough to supply the French army for three months; these magazines had been concealed both from the Spanish and English generals, and the owners were now punished for their treachery to their countrymen and their allies, by the loss of the whole. Dollars enough to load eight mules were also found hidden beneath some broken wheels and rubbish in a yard belonging to one of the convents.

*Murder of  
the Bishop  
of Coria.*

The behaviour of Victor to the wounded English deserves more especially to be mentioned, because Soult was carrying on the war with unrelenting barbarity. From Plasencia he laid waste the fertile vale in which that city stands with fire and sword. Serradilla, Pasanon, Arroyo-Molinos, El Barrado, Garganta la Olla, Texada, Riolobos, Malpartida, and La Oliva, were burnt by his troops, who, when they were not otherwise employed, went out upon the highways, robbed every person whose ill fortune compelled them to travel in this miserable country, and usually killed those whom they robbed. D. Juan Alvarez de Castro, the Bishop of Coria, in his eighty-sixth year, was murdered by these wretches. When Lapisse, in the month of June, marched from Salamanca to Alcantara, the Bishop with great difficulty and fatigue escaped; but the hardships which he then underwent were too much for one in such extreme old age, and when Soult quartered himself in this part of the country, he was confined to his

bed in the village of Los Hoyos. Had he been removed he must have died upon the road; it was, therefore, not a matter of choice but of necessity that he should remain and take his chance. Three of his clergy and some of his domestics remained with him; and a few old men took refuge under the same roof, thinking the presence of their venerable pastor would render it a safe asylum. The French entered the village, and took possession of the house where the old prelate lay in bed. His chaplains met them, and intreated protection for their spiritual father, and his domestics waited upon them, hoping to obtain favour, or at least to escape injury. But after these ruffians had eaten and drunk what was set before them, they plundered the house of every thing which could be converted to their own use, and destroyed whatever they could not carry away. Then they fell upon the unhappy people of the house, one of whom they killed, and wounded six others; lastly, they dragged the Bishop from his bed, and discharged two muskets into his body.

The plans of the enemy on the side of Extremadura were effected; they who had so lately trembled for Madrid had seen the allied armies recross the Tagus, and they gave themselves credit for the fortunate issue of a campaign, in which, if it had not been for the misconduct of the Spanish General and of the Central Junta, they must have been driven to the Ebro. On the side of La Mancha they were not less suc-

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*Venegas's  
army kept  
in inaction  
before and  
after the  
battle of  
Talavera.*

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*August.*

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cessful. Venegas, on the 14th of July, had received orders to occupy the attention of the enemy, and divert them from the allied armies as much as possible, without endangering himself. In consequence he advanced his army from El Moral, Ynfantes, Puerto Elano, and Valdepeñas, to Damiel, La Solana, El Corral de Caraquel, and Manzanares, keeping his headquarters still at Santa Cruz de Mudela, and expecting intelligence which would justify him in advancing to Consuegra and Madrilejos. At this time he supposed it was the intention of the combined armies to march upon Madrid; and when the want both of provisions and means of transport rendered it impossible for the British army to proceed, Cuesta gave him no intelligence of this, thereby exposing him to be destroyed, if the French, instead of marching upon Talavera, had directed their attack against him. Cuesta's whole conduct respecting the British army was so utterly unreasonable, that it can only be accounted for by ascribing it to obstinacy and incapacity. The wants of the British army were palpable; he had them before his eyes, and could at any moment have satisfied himself of the truth of every complaint which he received; yet he concealed the real state of things both from his own government and from Venegas, to both of whom it was of such essential importance that they should be accurately informed. The Spanish government received true intelligence from Mr. Frere, and

in consequence they dispatched a courier to Venegas, directing him to suspend his operations, and take up a defensive position. Cuesta's neglect rendered it prudent to dispatch these orders; but one evil produced another. Two hours after the arrival of the courier, Venegas received intelligence of the victory of Talavera, which was the more unexpected, because the Intruder, true to the French system, had published an Extraordinary Gazette, stating that he had defeated the allied armies on the 26th. Venegas ordered Te Deum to be sung in the neighbouring churches, and celebrated the victory by a general discharge: but he failed to improve it; and, instead of considering that the circumstances under which the Junta had dictated his instructions were now entirely changed, he adhered strictly to them, and lost the opportunity of advancing to Madrid; thus consummating the series of blunders by which a campaign so well planned, and a victory so bravely won, were rendered fruitless. Had he pushed for that city immediately, he might have entered it; Sir Robert Wilson would have joined him there, the resources of the city would have been secured for the allies, and the recovery of the capital would have raised the whole country far and near against the French. If Alburquerque had commanded this army, the momentous opportunity would not have been lost.

Venegas therefore remained with his vanguard at Aranjuez, and his head-quarters at

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*August.*

*His useless  
attempt  
upon To-  
ledo.*

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1809.  
August.

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Ocaña, while another division of his army under Lacy was employed in an idle attempt upon Toledo, which, as he did not choose to destroy the houses from whence the enemy fired at him, because it was a Spanish town, could not possibly succeed, and therefore ought not to have been made. On the third day after the battle Cuesta wrote to Venegas, directing him to advance upon Madrid. "This operation," he said, "must oblige Victor to detach a large part of his force toward the capital, in which case the allies would pursue him to that city, and if any unforeseen accident should compel Venegas to retire, he might retreat by Arganda and along the skirts of the mountains." This letter was written at eleven at night. Twelve hours afterwards Cuesta forwarded a second dispatch, stating that Victor's army had marched in the direction of Torrijos and Toledo. Venegas, upon receiving the first, ordered his whole force to unite at Aranjuez, meaning to lose no time in reaching the capital. The contents of the second staggered him; if the enemy marched for Toledo, they would fall on his rear-guard; if they went through Torrijos direct upon Madrid, they had the start, and would get between him and that city. He determined, therefore, still to collect his force in the neighbourhood of Aranjuez, and there wait for fresh orders; and he reminded Cuesta how indispensably necessary it was that their movements should be combined.

His army was collected on the night of the 3d, leaving only 600 foot and 200 horse in the neighbourhood of Toledo. The next day he received another dispatch from Cuesta, telling him of his march from Talavera to reinforce Sir Arthur. This letter was written with preposterous confidence; he was going, he said, to secure the victory against Soult, after which they should return to attack Victor. Meantime he advised Venegas to bear in mind, that general actions with better disciplined troops than their own did not suit them. Venegas felt the danger of his own situation, but his prevailing feelings were indignation and resentment at the multiplied proofs of incapacity which Cuesta had given. He wrote to his government, stating "that he was thus left to himself with an army inferior in number to the enemy, and, by the acknowledgement of the captain-general, inferior in discipline also: how much more deeply should he have been committed, if, in obedience to that general's orders, he had marched upon Madrid, relying on the promised support of the allied armies!" The reflection was just as well as natural; but Venegas ought to have reflected also, that if he had marched upon Madrid in time, that support would not have failed him. He added that no choice was left, save of commencing a retreat, which would dispirit the troops and destroy the national enthusiasm in all the places which they had occupied and must now abandon. Consequences

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August.*Venegas  
complains  
of Cuesta.*



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1809.  
*August.*

like these, which were immediately before his eyes, made him determine to remain where he was, and fight if he were attacked, preferring to be cut to pieces rather than submit to a shameful flight.

*The Intruder's movements after the battle.*

The enemy were well aware of the danger to which they had been exposed from the army of La Mancha. The Intruder, after his defeat at Talavera, retreated to Santa Olalla, leaving Victor to take up a position behind the Alberche, and watch the combined armies. The next day he moved to Bargas and Olias, near Toledo. On the night of the 31st, he received advices from Victor, who, being alarmed by Sir Robert Wilson's movements, was about to fall back to Maqueda; at the same time he learnt that Venegas was collecting his force at Aranjuez and threatening Madrid. Alarmed at this, he ordered Sebastiani and the corps of reserve to take up a position at Illescas, from whence they might either advance rapidly to support Victor, or to attack Venegas. Victor's next advices expressed further fears from the troops at Escalona, whose force he supposed to be far greater than it was: "If the enemy advanced in that direction," he said, "as seemed probable, he should retire to Mostoles." Joseph, trembling for the capital, moved to that place himself in the night between the 3d and 4th: Mostoles is only twelve miles from Madrid, . . so near had the scene of action been brought. From thence, having learnt that Victor's apprehensions had subsided, he turned

back on the following night to Valdemoro, summoned Sebastiani thither, and ordered an attack to be made upon Venegas.

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*August.*

That general expected such an attack from the moment when he was apprised of Cuesta's retreat. At daybreak on the 5th, he went from his head-quarters at Tembleque to reconnoitre the position at Aranjuez. The Queen's Bridge was the only one which had not been broken down; his first measure was to recall Lacy with the advanced guard from Puente Largo on the Xarama, that he might secure his retreat over this bridge in time; then he resolved to occupy the range of heights adjacent to Ontigola, beginning from Mount Parnaso, and to defend the passage of the river. Having directed these measures, he returned to his quarters, leaving Giron in command of the three divisions upon the Tagus. Three hours had hardly elapsed before Giron sent word that large columns of horse and foot and artillery were marching upon Puente Largo, and that some had already crossed the Xarama; this was followed by tidings that a great dust was seen in the direction of the ford of Añover. It could not now be doubted that a serious attack was about to be made; the ford would certainly be attempted, and Venegas was apprehensive that he should be assailed in the rear at the same time by troops from Toledo. He therefore ordered Lacy to cross the Queen's Bridge, and break it down; and marched his

*Venegas  
prepares for  
battle at  
Aranjuez.*

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reserve from Ocaña to the height on the left of the road between that town and Aranjuez, where they might be ready to resist an attack on the side of Toledo or the ford, and to support the retreat of the other divisions, who, if they found themselves unable to guard the river, were instructed to retreat to Ocaña; but their orders were to defend the passage to the utmost, and maintain every position inch by inch.

Lacy could not commence his retreat soon enough to avoid an attack; a strong body of cavalry from the Cuesta de la Reyna fell upon his rear, but they resisted the enemy, and, retiring in good order over the Queen's Bridge, broke it down, and took post upon some heights which protected it: the bridge itself was defended by Don Luis Riquelme with three battalions and four pieces of cannon; another battalion was stationed in the Plaza de S. Antonio. D. Miguel Antonio Panes, a captain of artillery, only son of the Marquis of Villa Panes, defended the broken Puente de Barcas with two eight-pounders and two companies. Other troops were stationed at the ford of the Infante Don Antonio's garden, at the Puente Verde, at the Vado Largo, or broad ford, and in the Calle de la Reyna. A reserve was placed on each side the road to Ocaña, and in the walks immediately adjoining the palace, on the left of which the whole of the cavalry stood ready to charge the enemy in case they should win the passage

of the river, or attack the Spaniards in the rear by a party which might have crossed at some remoter point.

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*August.*

The ground whereon a battle has been fought is never passed over by an intelligent traveller without producing a meditative train of thought, however transient, even if the scene has no other interest; but when the local circumstances are remarkable, the impressions become deeper and more durable, especially if the war were one in which, after any lapse of time, the heart still feels a lively concern. Aranjuez had been for nearly two centuries the spring residence of the Spanish court. It stands in a rich and lovely country, where the Xarama falls into the Tagus, in what was once a peninsula. Charles V. had built a hunting-seat there, which Philip III. enlarged into a palace, yet such a palace as was designed for comfort and comparative retirement, rather than for splendour. In his time a canal was made between the two rivers, partly with the intent of giving the place a character of safety, that the King might be secure there with no larger body of guards than his dignity required. Succeeding monarchs each added something to the embellishment of the grounds, and Charles IV., when Prince of Asturias, made a garden which was called by his name. Aranjuez itself was a poor village till the time of Grimaldi's administration, when a town was built there under his directions, and partly on the Dutch plan; the streets being

*Aranjuez  
and its gar-  
dens.*

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long, spacious, straight, and uniform, with rows of trees, for beauty and for shade, . . only the canals were wanting. The population had increased to some 10,000 persons, who depended in great measure for their prosperity upon the annual residence of the court.

There was one fountain which served as a monument of one of the proudest victories that had ever been achieved by Spain, the central part being formed from a block of marble which had been taken in one of the Turkish ships at Lepanto.

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But this was a place where the strength of vegetation made art appear subordinate, and the magnificence which all these elaborate embellishments produced was subservient to delight and comfort. The elms, which were the largest of their kind, had attained a growth which nothing but artificial irrigation in a genial soil and hot climate could have given them. The poplar and the tamarisk flourished in like manner; the latter grew along the banks of the Tagus with peculiar luxuriance. Every approach to Aranjuez was shaded with trees, from which avenues branched off in all directions, opening into glades, and diversified with bowers. Nor was this royal expenditure directed only to the purposes of splendid enjoyment. The Spanish Kings, with an intention better than the success which attended it, endeavoured to improve the agriculture of the country, by setting their subjects an example upon the royal domains. The best fruits in the Peninsula were cultivated for sale in the royal gardens; the finest oil in Spain was produced there, and wine from vineyards of the choicest grapes was collected in cellars of unequalled extent. They had attempted also to naturalize the camel there,

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and at one time from two to three hundred of these animals fed in the royal pastures, and were occasionally employed for burthen. But though they bred, and appeared to thrive there, the experiment was given up; the native animals, which are reared with so much less cost and care, being better suited to the soil, and surface, and climate of Spain.

The banks of the Tagus at Aranjuez, and the gardens which it had so long been the pride and pleasure of the Spanish Kings to embellish, were now to be made the scene of war. About two in the afternoon the French appeared upon the right bank, and began the attack along the whole line. They opened a heavy fire on all points, but more especially upon the ford of Don Antonio's garden, and the reserve from the walks were sent to strengthen that post. Panes at the Puente de Barcas was struck by a ball, which carried away his leg; a glance convinced him that the wound was mortal: "Comrades," said he, "stand by these guns till death . . . I am going to heaven:" and, as they bore him from the field, the only anxiety he expressed was, that another officer should take his place without delay. Don Gaspar Hermosa succeeded him, after planting a mortar at the Puente ford in the midst of the enemy's fire. The Spanish artillery was excellently served this day, and frequently silenced that of the French. One mortar placed in the thicket opposite the islet, made great havoc among the

enemy. Lacy, perceiving his own post secure, and that the main attack was made upon the left, at the Puente Verde, the gardens of the Prince and of Don Antonio, removed his division thither without waiting for orders. The firing continued till the approach of night, when the French, baffled in all their attempts, retired. The loss of the Spaniards was between two and three hundred; they computed that of the French at three hundred killed, and about a thousand wounded. The French force consisted of fourteen or fifteen thousand, being the whole of Sebastiani's corps. They themselves carefully avoided all mention of the action, saying only that they worsted the advanced guard of Venegas, and drove it beyond the Tagus. Giron, who commanded, was rewarded with the rank of camp-martial; and the Junta testified its sense of the heroism of Panes, who died a few hours after he was wounded, by exempting the title in his family from the duties called *lanzas* and *medias anatas* for ever, appointing his father a gentleman of the bed-chamber, and ordering a letter to be written to him, as a document to be preserved in the archives of his house, expressing, in the most honourable terms, the sense which the country entertained of the services rendered to it both by father and son.

The French after this repulse recrossed the Xarama, and, as Venegas had foreseen, prepared to attack him from the other side. *Deliberations concerning the army of La Mancha.*

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1808.  
August.



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1809.  
*August.*

According to their official statement, they thought it would be a long and difficult work to rebuild the bridges at Aranjuez, and that it would be less dangerous to force the passage of the Tagus at Toledo, where the Spaniards remained masters of the bridge. The Spanish General, therefore, disposed his troops at Aranjuez, Ocaña, La Guardia, and Tembleque, ready to march, as circumstances might require, to some point where he could only be attacked in front, and might be freed from the apprehension that the enemy would cut off his retreat by way of Toledo, and, having disabled him, penetrate to the Sierra Morena, the armies of Cuesta and Sir Arthur being too far off to prevent them. The necessity of retreating was indeed obvious; and the Junta were of opinion that he had no other course left than that of abandoning La Mancha, and taking post at the pass of Despeñaperros. Mr. Frere thought it would be better, if La Mancha were untenable, to occupy the passes with a part of his army only (for it was not to be supposed that at this time the French could make any serious attempt upon Andalusia), and march with or detach the rest upon the left of the enemy, through a country which they had never been able to occupy, Cuenca, Molina, and as far as Arragon; a movement upon the two former points would threaten the capital, upon the latter it would give the Spaniards a decided superiority in that quarter, and interrupt the communication of the French with

France. In the present state of things, Mr. Frere perceived how desirable it was that the Spaniards should have as many small armies as possible; their system of military subsistence and discipline being so imperfect, defeats became dangerous, and even destructive, in proportion to the size of the army; in small bodies they were comparatively of little importance: in small bodies the Spaniards had almost uniformly been successful; and such diversions would harass and distract the French, and waste their force.

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August.

Mr. Frere spoke upon this plan to one of the leading members of the war department, and would have delivered in his advice in writing, if Marquis Wellesley had not at that time been daily expected to arrive at Seville and supersede him. This circumstance, and the confidence which Venegas expressed in the spirit of his troops (for he seemed disposed to risk a battle rather than abandon La Mancha,) induced him to wait for the Marquis's arrival; and then it was too late. For on the same day that Mr. Frere recommended this proposed diversion, Venegas received advices from the fifth division, under General Zerain, by Toledo, that the French had received a reinforcement of 8000 men, and were about to attack him. Upon this the general ordered the fourth division from Tembleque to advance to his support. While they were on their way, Sebastiani, having collected his whole corps at Toledo, attacked Ze-

*Venegas resolves to attack the enemy.*

*Aug. 8.*

*Aug. 9.*

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*August.*

rain, who retreated in good order to Sonseca, and from thence turned to Almonacid to join the troops which had been sent to his assistance. At Almonacid Venegas assembled his whole army on the 10th, and believing that the number of the enemy did not exceed 14,000, the same reasons which had made him stand his ground at Aranjuez, after the retreat of the combined armies, induced him once more to give the French battle. He could not bear to abandon the people of La Mancha, who had welcomed him with enthusiasm on his advance: he knew how injurious it was, not merely to the general character of an army, but to the individual feelings of the soldiery, to be perpetually giving way before the enemy, losing ground, and losing reputation and hope also; and his success at Aranjuez made him confident in the courage and conduct of his troops. Before he delivered his own opinion, he summoned the different chiefs of division to council, and they perfectly accorded with his pre-determination. This was on the 10th; he resolved to let the troops rest the next day, that they might recover from their march, and it was agreed to attack the enemy at daybreak on the 12th. Meantime it was supposed more accurate information of their number might be obtained.

*He is at-  
tacked by  
them.*

Delay has ever been the bane of the Spanish councils, and Venegas should have remembered, that in offensive war every thing depends upon celerity. Victor had now opened a communi-

cation with Soult, and the Intruder being thus delivered from all fear of the allied armies, joined Sebastiani, with the reserve, on the 9th. While Venegas was deliberating, his position was reconnoitred; and on the morning of the day which he had allowed for rest he was attacked by an army of little less than double the force at which he had computed it. The Spaniards, however, were not taken by surprise. The right wing, under Vigodet, extended to some rising ground beyond the village of Almonacid: the centre, consisting of two divisions, under Camp-marshal Castejon, were in the plain before the village. Lacy commanded the left, which was supported by a height, detached from the range of hills that run north and south, beginning at Toledo. Giron was stationed, with three battalions, as a reserve, behind the centre; the rest of his division were posted, part on the heights to the left, part at an advanced battery, and the remainder upon the Castle hill, behind the village. The cavalry, under Camp-marshals the Marquis of Gelo, D. Tomas Zerain, and the Viscount de Zolina, were placed in two bodies, one on each wing.

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*August.*

The Intruder was in the field; but Sebastiani was the real commander. That general perceived that the event of the day depended upon the possession of the hill on the Spaniards' left, and he ordered Laval to attack it with his two divisions. Laval formed in close columns, by

*Battle of  
Almonacid.*

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1800.  
*August.*

divisions and brigades, and attacked the hill both in front and on the right at once. The French suffered considerably in this attack. Count Sobolesky and another chief of battalion were killed, several of equal rank wounded; but they had the advantage of numbers as well as discipline. The colonel who commanded on the hill was wounded, and before Giron could reach the spot with the reserve, the battalions which were posted there gave way. These battalions, instead of rallying when they found themselves supported, confused the troops who came to support them. The height, upon which the fate of the day depended, was lost; and the enemy, having won it, attacked the Spaniards in flank. Lacy upon this wheeled to face the enemy, and for a while withstood them; 200 cavalry, led by Don Nicholas Chacon, charged one of their columns, which, forming itself into a square, withstood the attack; and Chacon, having his horse shot under him, and some of his best officers and soldiers killed, was compelled to withdraw. In the centre the enemy were equally successful, and at length the Spaniards fell back along the whole of their line. Nevertheless the ground was well contested, and Venegas took up a second position behind Almonacid, supported by the Castle hill. Here he was presently attacked at all points; his cavalry made another charge, which failed for lack of numbers, not of spirit, and the general then perceived that there was no hope of reco-

vering the day. He therefore commenced his retreat, and ordered Vigodet, whose division was at this time the least exposed, to bring up and cover the rear. Vigodet performed this service with great coolness, recovered and spiked one of the cannon which had been taken, and began at length to fall back himself in good order. At this time some ammunition carts, which were blown up on his right, that they might not fall into the enemy's hands, frightened the horses of the little cavalry which covered his own retreat, and the French, taking advantage of their confusion, charged him vigorously. The second in command of the division, D. Francisco de Reyna, checked the pursuers, while Vigodet rallied the scattered horse, and collected about 1000 men, under whose protection he left the field. They retreated by different routes to Herencia, meaning to fall back to Manzanares, Membrilla, and Solana. As far as Herencia the movement was effected in good order, only a few soldiers, straggling from their ranks to drink at the few wells in that arid country; but when the van reached Manzanares, a cry arose that the French had got before them on the road of Valdepeñas, to cut off their retreat. This false-report, either originating in treason or in cowardice, spread through the troops: from that moment subordination was at an end, and they forfeited the credit which had been gained in the action, by dispersing.

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*August.*

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*August.*

Sebastiani stated the loss of the Spaniards at 4000 killed, 4000 prisoners, an immense number wounded, 100 ammunition waggons, and thirty-five pieces of cannon. The whole of the artillery and baggage was certainly lost; but the number of prisoners was grossly exaggerated, because the Spaniards did not disperse till they had accomplished their retreat; and the French, with that inconsistency which so often betrayed the falsehood of their official accounts, admitted that none of their corps could be overtaken. He gave no account of his own loss; Venegas estimated it at 8000, . . an exaggeration as great as that of the French general; but that the French suffered severely was evident, because they were long crippled for any further operations. Venegas retired to La Carolina, his men assembled at the passes of the Sierra, and in a few days he was again at the head of a respectable army. The enemy had now effected every thing which they proposed; they had driven Cuesta and the British beyond the Tagus on one side, and on the other had recovered possession of La Mancha; and the Intruder, rejoicing in the issue of a campaign, which opened under such inauspicious aspects, returned triumphantly to Madrid. The disgrace of Talavera sate easy upon the French; . . with their usual contempt of truth, they affirmed that they had won the victory; and the situation of the contending armies a few weeks after the battle gave credit to the impudent assertion.

## CHAPTER XXV.

PLANS OF THE FRENCH. SIR A. WELLESLEY  
 RAISED TO THE PEERAGE. MARQUIS WELLES-  
 LEY ARRIVES IN SPAIN. ALTERATIONS IN THE  
 BRITISH MINISTRY. STATE OF THE SPANISH  
 GOVERNMENT. THE BRITISH ARMY RETREATS  
 TO THE FRONTIERS OF PORTUGAL. BATTLES  
 OF TAMAMES, OCANA, AND ALBA DE TORMES.

NEVER during the war had the prospect ap-  
 peared so hopeful as when Sir Arthur entered  
 Spain. For the first time Buonaparte had been  
 repulsed at all points in a great battle; and for  
 the first time also a spirit of national resistance  
 had broken forth in Germany, . . the only spirit  
 by which his tyranny could be overthrown.  
 The Spaniards seemed to acquire strength from  
 their defeats, learning confidence in their re-  
 sources, if not experience from misfortunes;  
 while the British army, by the passage of the  
 Douro and the discomfiture of Soult, had once  
 more made the enemy feel what they might ap-  
 prehend from such troops and such a com-  
 mander.

The Peninsula was but a secondary object in  
 the all-grasping schemes of Buonaparte's ambi-  
 tion. At first he had expected to secure it

1809.  
August.

*Soult pro-  
 poses imme-  
 diately to  
 invade Por-  
 tugal.*



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XXV.

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without a struggle; nor was he yet so undeceived concerning the real nature of the resistance to be experienced there, as to believe that any serious effort would be required for completing its conquest. In Germany it was, he thought, that the fate of Europe must be decided; and this opinion was proclaimed in England by those who, on every occasion, sought to persuade the public that resistance to such a statesman and such a general, wherever it was attempted, could only end in defeat, and humiliation, and ruin. Under this impression he had ordered the intrusive government, which was in fact entirely under his orders, to content itself with protracting the war till the campaign in Germany should be brought to a close. That campaign was now ended. The battle of Wagram had re-established his shaken power; an armistice had immediately been sued for, and in the negotiations which followed, the house of Austria surrendered more than the French king Francis I. had lost at Pavia. The news of this great success did not, however, induce the Intruder to deviate from his instructions. M. Soult, the most enterprising as well as the ablest of the French officers who were employed in Spain, proposed at this time a plan for re-entering Portugal. The line which should have secured the communication of the British army with Lisbon he occupied, now that that army had found it necessary to retreat across the Tagus. He proposed, therefore, to move from Plasencia

against Beresford's inefficient force, while Ney, advancing from Salamanca, should act upon its left flank. That army, if not absolutely destroyed, would be prevented from forming a junction by way of Alcantara with Sir Arthur; and the French, by rapidly pursuing this advantage, might occupy Abrantes, and once more take possession of Lisbon, in which case Soult, still deceiving himself with regard to the disposition of the Portuguese, thought they would submit to an enemy whom they found it hopeless to resist. The plan was boldly conceived, though M. Soult had not sufficiently taken into his calculation the character of the troops with which he would again be brought in contact: but it was rejected by Joseph, who was at that time guided chiefly by M. Jourdan. That General, distinguished for his signal successes in the revolutionary war, held the high situation of Major-General of the army of Spain; and he preferring what seemed the surer though the slower course, resolved implicitly to follow the Emperor Napoleon's instructions, and undertake no offensive operation for the present. A plan, he said, had been laid down for invading Portugal, and would be executed in the month of February. It was their intention to subjugate the south of Spain before this should be undertaken; and if the British Commander had possessed as little foresight as appeared in the conduct of the Spanish government, or if the British army had not derived better support

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*Sir A. Wel-  
lesley raised  
to the peer-  
age.*

from the Portuguese than from the Spaniards, the French might have succeeded in both parts of their intended operations.

The Central Junta expressed its sense of Sir Arthur Wellesley's services, by nominating him one of the Captain-generals of the army (a rank nearly equivalent to that of our field-marshal), and presenting him, in the name of Ferdinand, with some horses selected from the best breeds of Andalusia. "This tribute," they said, "was of small value in comparison with the services which he had rendered to Spain, and still less in proportion to the wishes of those who offered it: but for hearts like his, the satisfaction resulting from great achievements was their best recompense; not was it in the power of man to bestow any reward which could equal the glory of being one of the principal deliverers of a great and generous people, of listening to their blessings, and of deserving their gratitude." Sir Arthur accepted the horses, and the appointment also, provided he should receive permission from his own sovereign; but he declined the pay attached to it, not thinking it becoming that he should burthen the finances of Spain during such a contest. In England, also, he was recompensed with new honours. As soon as the news of his victory arrived, he was raised to the peerage by the titles of Baron Douro of Wellesley, and Viscount Wellington of Talavera, and of Wellington in the county of Somerset.

On the fourth morning after the battle, while the bells of Cadiz were ringing, the cannon firing, and the people rejoicing with higher hopes than had been felt since the surrender of Dupont, Marquis Wellesley landed in that harbour to supersede Mr. Frere. A great concourse assembled to see him land, and as he set foot on shore, a French flag was spread before him, that he might tread upon it in honour of his brother's victory. The people drew his carriage, which in that country is an unusual mark of respect. The Marquis gave one of them a purse of gold to distribute among his comrades: but the man returned it, and, in the name of the people, assured him they desired no reward, being happy that they had this opportunity of expressing the sentiments of the whole nation. Both at Cadiz and at Seville the Marquis was received with every mark of public honour, and with the most enthusiastic expressions of attachment and gratitude to the British nation. But the first dispatches from Sir Arthur opened upon him a disheartening prospect. The combined armies, amounting to not less than 60,000 men, and 16,000 or 18,000 horse, were depending entirely for their daily supply upon the country, which did not contain a population in many square miles equal to the number of the army, and could not of course produce a sufficiency for its sustenance. Extremadura indeed is the worst peopled and least cultivated pro-

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vince of the whole Peninsula. It was necessary to send to a great distance for supplies, which, scanty as they were, could not be procured regularly, nor without great difficulty. The troops were ill fed, and frequently received no rations whatever. Effectual measures, Sir Arthur said, must be taken, and that speedily. No army could serve to any purpose unless it were properly fed; and it was absurd to suppose that a Spaniard, or a man or animal of any country, could make exertions without a due supply of food; in fact the Spaniards were more clamorous, and more exhausted, if they did not receive it regularly, than the English. The English, however, were in a state of great distress; from the 3d till the 7th they had had no bread; then about 4000 pounds of biscuit were divided among 30,000 mouths, and the whole supply was exhausted. “The army,” said Sir Arthur, “will be entirely lost, if this treatment continues. If efficient measures had been adopted by the government when the distress of the British troops was first represented to them, the benefit must ere this have been experienced. There had been no neglect on the part of Mr. Frere: the evil was owing to the poverty and exhausted state of the country; to the inactivity of the magistrates and people; to their disinclination to taking any trouble, except that of packing up their property, and removing when they heard of the approach of a French patrol;

to their habits of insubordination and disobedience, and to the want of power in the government and their officers."

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Cuesta's unaccommodating temper aggravated the evil. He was applied to after the battle for ninety mules to draw the British artillery in place of those lost in the action; there were at that time hundreds in his army employed in drawing empty carts, and yet he refused to part with any. Five guns belonging to Alburquerque's division having been taken at Arzobispo, the Duke endeavoured to make over to the British army the mules attached to them; but Cuesta took them for himself. His own cavalry were plentifully supplied with barley, while hundreds of the British horses died for want of it. In other respects, his men suffered as many privations as the English; and vexation at this and at the untoward issue of the campaign, combined with bodily infirmity, seems to have bewildered him: he lent ear to every complaint against the allies; and at a time when they were literally starving, both men and horses, he wrote to their General, stating that his own troops were in want of necessary food, because all that he ordered for their use was intercepted by the British and their commissaries. The English, he said, actually sold biscuit and meat; and he heard continual complaints and saw continual traces that they plundered all the places through which they passed, and even followed the peasantry to the mountains, for the purpose of stripping them

*Disputes  
with Cuesta  
concerning  
supplies.*

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even to the shirt. Sir Arthur positively denied that any thing going to the Spanish army had been stopped by the British ; as for the tale of his soldiers selling provisions, he observed, that it was beneath the dignity of his Excellency's situation and character to notice such things, and beneath his own to reply to them. He was concerned that General Cuesta should conceive there was any reason for complaining of the British troops ; but, continued he, " when troops are starving, which those under my command have been, as I have repeatedly told your Excellency since I joined you, and particularly when they had no bread from the 3d to the 7th, it is not astonishing that they should go to the villages and even to the mountains to look for food where they think they can get it. The complaints of the inhabitants, however, should not have been confined to the conduct of the British ; here in Deleitosa I have seen Spanish soldiers, who ought to have been elsewhere, take off the doors of the houses which were locked up, in order that they might plunder the houses ; and they afterwards burnt the doors."

To preserve discipline among starving troops is indeed impossible, and neither Cuesta nor Sir Arthur could be responsible for their men under such circumstances ; but the letter of the former brought the question respecting provisions to a point, and Sir Arthur called upon him to state distinctly whether he understood that the Spanish army was to have not only all the provisions

which the country could afford, but all those also which were sent from Seville; whether any magazines had been formed, and from whence the troops were to draw provisions? "I hope," said he, "that I shall receive satisfactory answers to these questions to-morrow morning; if not, I beg that your Excellency will be prepared to occupy the posts opposite Almaraz, as it will be impossible for me to remain any longer in a country in which no arrangement is made for provisioning my troops, and in which it is understood that all the provisions which are either found in the country, or are sent from Seville (as I have been informed, for the use of the British army) are to be applied solely and exclusively to the Spanish troops." On the day that this correspondence took place, an English commissary arriving from Truxillo with bread and barley for the British army, was stopped on the way, and deprived of all his barley and part of his bread by a detachment of Spanish horse. Whatever momentary irritation might be occasioned by circumstances like these, Sir Arthur commiserated the sufferings of the Spanish army too sincerely to harbour any resentment; but he perceived the absolute necessity of withdrawing. "It is useless," he said to the British ambassador, "to complain; but we are not treated as friends, much less as the only prop on which the cause of Spain can depend. But, besides this want of good-will, which can easily be traced to the temper of the General, there



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is such a want of resources in the country, and so little exertion in bringing forward what is to be found; that if the army were to remain here much longer, it would become totally useless. The daily and increasing loss of horses from deficiency of food, and from the badness of what there is, is really alarming." Ney's return to Old Castille strengthened him in this resolution; it satisfied him that no serious attack upon Andalusia was intended for the present, and he thought it not unlikely that this corps of the enemy was about to invade Portugal, for the sake of drawing him out of Spain.

*Mr. Frere  
requires the  
removal of  
Cuesta.*

*Aug. 9.*

The necessity of removing Cuesta from the command appeared so urgent to Mr. Frere, that he deemed it his duty to present a memorial upon the subject, though Marquis Wellesley was expected two days afterward at Seville. He dwelt upon his abandonment of the wounded at Talavera, and upon the imminent danger to which he had exposed Venegas by concealing from him, as well as from his government, the true state of the combined armies, and the inability of the English to proceed. The dismissal of Cuesta, he said, could not long be delayed, and it was important that it should take place instantly, and another commander appointed: either the choice being left to Sir Arthur, or the Junta itself appointing the Duke of Alburquerque, who possessed his confidence and that of the army, and whose abilities had been tried and approved. This was the only

satisfaction which could be given to the British General and his army, and even this would be little : “ the wound,” said Mr. Frere, “ is very deep, and the English nation could not have received one more difficult to heal than the abandonment of their wounded at Talavera.” This was the last act of Mr. Frere in his public capacity ; and it was consistent with the whole conduct of that minister, who, during his mission never shrunk from any responsibility, nor ever, from the fear of it, omitted any effort which he thought requisite for the common welfare of his own country and of Spain. In presenting such a memorial, while his successor was, as it were, at the door, he was conscious that he might appear to be acting irregularly in his public character ; and in his private one, that it might alter the feelings with which he could have wished to take leave of his friends in Spain ; but, in addition to the urgency of the case, he considered also that it would be peculiarly unpleasant for Marquis Wellesley to begin his mission with an altercation in which his brother was concerned. Mr. Frere’s situation had been unfavourable to any thing like a controlling influence ; the intelligence which announced the intended assistance of a British force had been accompanied with an intimation of his recall, and for some months he had, as he expressed himself, literally been a minister only from day to day, looking for the arrival of his successor by the first fair wind. The Junta

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expressed their sense of his zealous services by conferring upon him the Castilian title of Marquis de la Union (which he received permission from his own government to retain); and, in reply to the momentary outcry which misrepresentation and party spirit had raised against him in England, they represented his conduct such as they conceived it to be, and as it truly was. This had never prevented him from using the strongest language and taking the highest tone toward the very persons who had been foremost in this friendly act; but he felt how unfavourable his situation was, and, knowing that that of Marquis Wellesley would in all respects be very different, he hoped the Marquis might be able to remedy the existing evils as far as they were capable of being remedied. The task, however, was no easy one. "It might seem," he said, "that a British minister ought before that time to have established a regular system for securing the subsistence of the armies; but the evil lay deep; it arose from an old despotic government, and from eighteen years of the basest corruption, intrigue, and public pillage. The effects of all this still continued, the system itself was not wholly done away, and even a sovereign in ordinary times would find it difficult to remedy it."

*Cuesta resigns the command.*

Marquis Wellesley, on his arrival, did not think it expedient to insist on Cuesta's removal. That General, he observed, was said to be deficient in every quality necessary for an extensive

command, except courage ; his temper rendered him peculiarly unfit for acting with an allied army, and it was scarcely possible that another officer with equal disqualifications should be found in the Spanish service. But the government was under some apprehension of his influence, which was supposed to be extensive and dangerous, though it rested on no other foundation than the precarious one of undeserved popularity. The Marquis, therefore, limited his interference to a strong expression of his sense of the General's misconduct, being of opinion that his removal might be effected more willingly and with less danger if it appeared to be the consequence of his own actions, rather than the result of a direct application from the British ambassador. The Junta, however, were desirous that such a direct application should be made ; and Marquis Wellesley then addressed a note to Garay, stating that it was impossible to hope for any degree of co-operation, or even for any aid from the troops of Spain to the British army, if the chief command remained in the hands of General Cuesta. Cuesta had wisely anticipated such a measure. Two days after the date of that letter to Sir Arthur, in which he complained so preposterously of the British troops, a paralytic stroke deprived him of the use of one leg ; feeling himself then completely incapacitated, he delivered over the army to the second in command, D. Francisco de Eguia, and requested permission to resign, that he

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*Eguia suc-  
ceeds ad in-  
terim to the  
command.*

might go to the baths of Albama. When, therefore, the Marquis delivered in his note, he was informed that Cuesta's resignation had been accepted.

Eguia was well acquainted with the military topography of Spain, but had no other qualification for the command of an army: at the battle of Medellin he did not venture to depart from his orders without receiving fresh ones from Cuesta, at a time when it was impossible for Cuesta to communicate with him, and by this imbecility he completed the destruction of the army that day. Mr. Frere, knowing that the military Junta would be most likely to confirm him in the command, because he was one of the old school, wrote a private note to Garay, deprecating such an appointment. Alburquerque was the proper person for the command; but the Junta were jealous of his rank, his popularity, his talents, and his enlightened views; and Marquis Wellesley soon discovered that, if he were named to the command, the army under him would certainly be reduced. Till, however, a successor to Cuesta should be chosen, the command devolved upon Eguia; and when that General notified this to the British Commander, he accompanied the intelligence with the fairest professions, desiring him to depute a confidential officer, who, with another appointed on the part of the Spaniards, might regulate the distribution of provisions in such a manner that the English army should

be supplied in preference to the Spaniards. Lord Wellington expressed, in reply, his perfect confidence in the intentions of Eguia, and sent some officers to Truxillo, there to meet any whom Eguia might appoint, and settle some practicable arrangement: a preference like that which was spoken of he well perceived was impossible.

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When first the Junta were informed of the distress of the British army, nothing appeared to hurt them so much as that their own troops should have been supplied while their allies were in want, and they ordered Cuesta, in every instance, to supply the British troops in preference to his own. They directed the Junta of Badajoz to send two members of their body into the vale of Plasencia, and secure the persons of those magistrates who, having engaged to furnish means for the British army, had failed in their engagement; to supersede them also, and place at the disposal of the British commissary every thing which he might require. Before these measures could be executed, Soult entered from Old Castille, and the whole of the fertile country on that side of the Tagus fell into the possession of the enemy. When the complaints of the British General became louder, the Junta, alarmed at his intended retreat into Portugal, deputed D. Lorenzo Calvo, one of their own body, to the armies, hoping that his exertions, aided by his authority, would effectually remedy the evil. Calvo was considered a man of energetic character and activity, and, having been bred

*Calvo sent  
to see to the  
supplies.*

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up in commerce, had acquired those habits of business which were necessary for the service in which he was now employed. True to that system of dissimulation, which, by the old school, was esteemed essential in all business of state, he was charged to invest Cuesta with the order of Charles III. lest that General should take umbrage at the distinction conferred upon Lord Wellington, though at this very time the Junta were so offended at Cuesta's conduct, that nothing but their fears had prevented them from immediately displacing him.

*Lord Wellington declares his intention of falling back.*

But neither Eguia's professions, nor the measures of the government, nor the presence of one of its members, produced any relief to the British army. Had it been in a condition for service, and provided with means of transport, Lord Wellington had it in view to act against the French at Plasencia, for which purpose he ordered materials to be collected for repairing the Puente de Cardinal; but his cavalry had now consumed all the forage within reach; they were obliged to go from twenty to thirty miles to procure it, and frequently when they had gone so far, the Spaniards, being themselves in equal want, deprived them of it on their return. The horses were at length so much reduced that they were scarcely able to relieve the outposts. More than a month had now elapsed since the British General informed Cuesta that, if he were not supplied, he could not remain in Spain. In the course of that time, if proper measures had been taken, sup-

plies might have been forwarded from the farthest part of Andalusia; but not a mule or cart, or article of provision of any kind had been obtained under any order from, or arrangement made by, the government. Lord Wellington applied for a remount of only an hundred mares, which could not be used in the Spanish cavalry, because they used stallions; even these he could not procure, nor did he receive an answer to his application. It was now become absolutely necessary to withdraw, and on the 18th of August, he requested Marquis Wellesley to give notice to the government that he was about so to do. "Since the 22d of last month," said he, "the horses have not received their regular deliveries of barley, and the infantry not ten days' bread. I have no doubt the government have given orders that we should be provided as we ought to be, but orders are not sufficient. To carry on the contest to any purpose, the labour and service of every man and of every beast in the country should be employed in the support of the armies; and these should be so classed and arranged as not only to secure obedience to the orders of the government, but regularity and efficiency in the performance of the service. Magazines might then with ease be formed, and transported wherever the armies should be stationed. But as we are now situated, 50,000 men are collected upon a spot which cannot afford subsistence for 10,000, and there are no

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means of sending to a distance to make good the deficiency: the Junta have issued orders, which, for want of arrangement, there are no persons to obey; and the army would perish here, if I were to remain, before the supplies could arrive."

*Corre-  
spondence  
with Eguia  
and Calvo.*

Prepared as both the Spanish government and general ought to have been for such a determination, both manifested the greatest astonishment when it was announced. Eguia wrote to Lord Wellington, repeating his protestations, that he should have every thing which he required, and that the Spaniards should go without any thing, rather than the British should be in want. "An English commissary," he said, "should reside at Truxillo, who should have a key of the magazines, and take the proportion for the British army, though his own should perish. If," he continued, "notwithstanding these conclusive protestations, the British General persisted in marching into Portugal, it would be apparent that other causes induced him to take that step, and not the want of subsistence." Upon this insulting assertion, Lord Wellington informed Eguia that any further correspondence between them was unnecessary. He entered, nevertheless, into a sufficient explanation of the real state of affairs. The magazines of Truxillo, according to a return sent by Eguia himself, did not contain a sufficiency to feed the British army alone for one day. No doubt was entertained of the exertions of the

Spanish General, nor of his sincerity. "The deficiencies," said Lord Wellington, "arise not from want of orders of your Excellency, but from the want of means in the country, from the want of arrangement in the government, and from the neglect of timely measures to supply the wants which were complained of long ago." A letter from Calvo to Lord Wellington implied the same suspicion concerning the motives of his retreat as Eguia had done, though in more qualified terms. This member of the Junta came forward with something more specious than vague promises and protestations. "He bound himself," he said, "to provide the army, within three days, with all the rations which it might require; and within fifteen days to have magazines formed in places appointed by the British General, containing all the articles which the army could consume in one or two months; and to provide also carts and mules, both of draft and burthen, sufficient for the transport of these magazines." He then protested that 7000 rations of bread, 50,000 pounds of flour, 250 *fanegas* of barley, 50 of rye, 100 of wheat, and 60 *arrobas* of rice were ready, with means of transport for them, and before the morrow noon would reach the British army in their present position. "My activity," said Calvo, "shall not rest until continual remittances of the same articles prove that my promises deserve to be confided in; and if there were in your Excellency's intention any dispo-

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sition to alter your purpose of retreat, I am certain I should obtain the satisfaction of hearing your Excellency yourself confess that I had surpassed your hopes." At the time when Lord Wellington received this letter, he had in his possession an order dated only five days back, and signed by this very member of the Supreme Junta, ordering to the Spanish headquarters, for the use of the Spanish army, all the provisions which the British commissary had provided in the town of Guadalupe and its neighbourhood. Well, therefore, might he reply to him, that he could have no confidence in his assurances. "As for the promise," said he, "of giving provisions to the British army to the exclusion of the Spanish troops, such a proposal can only have been made as an extreme and desperate measure to induce me to remain in Spain; and were it practicable, I could not give my consent to it. The Spanish army must be fed as well as the British. I am fully aware," he continued, "of the consequences which may follow my departure, though there is now no enemy in our front; but I am not responsible for them, whatever they may be. They are responsible who, having been made acquainted with the wants of this army more than a month ago, have taken no effectual means to relieve them; who allowed a brave army, which was rendering gratuitous services to Spain, and which was able and willing to pay for every thing it received, to starve in the midst of their

country, and be reduced by want to a state of inefficiency; who refused or neglected to find carriages for removing the officers and soldiers who had been wounded in their service, and obliged me to give up the equipment of the army for the performance of this necessary act of humanity." On the following day Lord Wellington began his retreat in the direction of Badajoz.

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He halted at Merida, and eight days after his departure, being then four marches from Xarajejo, he found none of the supplies on the road which had so confidently been promised. Having, however, been able to separate his troops, and being out of reach of Eguia's army, he now procured regular supplies. Marquis Wellesley meantime had been indefatigable in pressing upon the government the necessity of a regular plan for provisioning the armies; and he found, upon investigation, that orders enough had been issued, but no means had been employed either to enforce the execution of those orders, or to ascertain in what respects they had failed, or what were the causes either of their total failure or of their partial success. No magazines or regular depôts had been established, no regular means of transport provided, nor any persons regularly appointed to conduct and superintend convoys, under the direction of the general commanding the army; nor had any system been adopted for drawing from the more fertile provinces, by a connected

*Marquis  
Wellesley  
proposes a  
plan for  
supplying  
the armies.*

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chain of magazines, resources to supply the deficiency of those poorer countries in which the army might be acting. At the solicitation of the Junta, Marquis Wellesley delivered in a plan for remedying these evils. It was less easy of execution in Spain than it would have been in England, where the system of our stage-coaches and waggons has disciplined a great number of persons in the detail of such arrangements; yet, with due exertions on the part of government, it might speedily have been established. Two days elapsed, and no notice was taken of the proposal; he requested a reply, and after two days more Garay put into his hand a long string of regulations for the internal management of the magazines when they should have been formed. Marquis Wellesley again anxiously inquired whether the Junta were disposed to adopt the plan which he had formed at their request, and whether any steps had been taken for carrying it into effect? At length, after it had been nine days in their hands, he was informed that they assented to it,—but this was all; it was a mere verbal assent, and no measures whatever were taken for beginning arrangements of such urgent necessity. The government at the same time expressed its confidence that the British army would now rejoin the Spaniards, and make a forward movement against the enemy. Marquis Wellesley suspected some of the Junta of treason. “This proposition,” said he to his government, “ac-

cords with the general tenor of those profes-  
 sions of zeal for active war, which have parti-  
 cularly characterized the declarations of the  
 Junta since the army has been deprived of the  
 means of movement and supply. Far from  
 affording any just foundation of confidence in  
 their intentions, such declarations of activity  
 and enterprise, unaccompanied by any provi-  
 dent or regular attention to the means and  
 objects of the war, serve only to create addi-  
 tional suspicions of ignorance, weakness, or in-  
 sincerity. No person acquainted with the real  
 condition of the British and Spanish forces at  
 this time, could reasonably advise a forward  
 movement against the enemy with any other  
 view than the certain destruction of the allied  
 armies."

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The conduct of the Junta gave strong grounds  
 for such a suspicion. The real cause which had  
 checked the progress of a victorious army, and  
 finally reduced it to a state unfit for service,  
 could not be concealed; public opinion loudly  
 imputed this evil to the negligence of govern-  
 ment, and the government endeavoured, by un-  
 generous artifices, to divert the general indig-  
 nation. Rumours were set afloat that the real  
 cause of the retreat of the British army was  
 very different from the assigned one; they had  
 not fallen back upon Portugal because there  
 had been any deficiency either in their means  
 of supply or of transport, but because of certain  
 political considerations, inconsistent with the

*His ill opi-  
nion of the  
Spanish go-  
vernment.*

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security and honour of Spain, and with the good faith of Great Britain. Demands, it was whispered, had been made in the King of England's name, for the cession of Cadiz, of the Havannah, and even of the whole island of Cuba; changes had been required in the form of the Spanish government, as preliminary conditions to the further operations of the British troops in Spain, and Lord Wellington had retreated only because these demands were refused. These reports, which, if not invented by the government, certainly were not discountenanced by them, were absolutely and entirely false; nothing had been asked from Spain except subsistence for the army employed in her defence. Marquis Wellesley, however, though he perceived the criminal misconduct of the government, and though he affirmed that in the last campaign no rational motives could be imagined for the conduct of some of the generals and officers, unless it were supposed that they concerted their operations with the French instead of the British general, did justice to the people of Spain. "Whatever insincerity or jealousy towards England existed, was to be found," he said, "in the government, its officers, and adherents; no such unworthy sentiment prevailed among the people." They had done their duty, and were still ready to do it; and, notwithstanding the vexations which he experienced, and the alarm and even ill-will which the retreat of the British excited, he remem-

bered, as became him, that the cause of Spain and England was the same: while, therefore, he expressed his opinion that the Cortes ought to be assembled, and a more efficient government formed than that of so ill-constituted and anomalous a body as the Junta, he listened willingly to every suggestion for employing the British troops in any practicable manner. Might it not be possible, it was said, for them to take up a position on the left bank of the Guadiana, occupying Merida as an advanced post, their right at Almendralejo, and their left extending toward Badajoz? Portugal might be covered by this position; Seville protected at the same time, and a point of support given to the left of the Spanish army, which should in that case be cantoned in Medellin, Don Benito, and Villa Nueva de la Serena.

This plan the Marquis proposed to his brother; but that able general was of opinion that the Guadiana was not defensible by a weaker against a stronger army, being fordable in very many places, and affording no position. The Spanish army, he thought, was at that time in the best position in that part of the country, one which they ought to hold against any force that could be brought against them, if they could hold any thing; while they held it they covered the Guadiana effectually, and their retreat from it was always secure. He, therefore, recommended that they should send away the bridge of boats which was still opposite Almaraz, and

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*Lord Wellington objects to taking a position on the Guadiana.*



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remain where they were as long as possible. For the British army, Lord Wellington said, he saw no chance at present of its resuming offensive operations; and he desired that no hopes might be held out to the Junta of any further co-operation on his part with the Spanish troops, which in their present state were by no means to be depended on. He saw the difficulty to which this determination might reduce the Spanish government; their army might be seized with a panic, run off, and leave every thing exposed to instant loss. All he could say to this was, that he was in no hurry to withdraw from Spain; he wanted to refresh his troops; he should not enter Portugal till he had heard Marquis Wellesley's sentiments; if he did enter it he should go no farther than the frontier, where he should be so near, that the enemy, unless in very great force, would not venture across the Guadiana, leaving the British army upon their flank and rear; in fact, therefore, he should be as useful to Spain within the Portuguese frontier as upon the Guadiana, and even more so, because the nearer he went to Portugal, the more efficient he should become. The best way to cover the Guadiana and Seville, was by a position on the enemy's flank.

*Alburquerque appointed to the command in Extremadura.*

As an inducement to Lord Wellington to remain, and co-operate with the Spanish army, the Junta proposed to place the corps which they designed to leave in Extremadura under his command. This was to consist of 12,000

men, a number inadequate to the service for which they were required ; but the true reason was perceived by the British General ; he had by this time had ample opportunities of discovering that the Junta, in the distribution of their force, did not consider military defence and military operations so much as political intrigues and the attainment of trifling political objects. The Junta of Extremadura had insisted that Albuquerque should have the command in their province ; the government was weak enough in authority to be obliged to yield this, and weak enough in judgement to diminish as far as possible the army which they unwillingly entrusted to this envied and most ill-treated nobleman. Lord Wellington, who could not have accepted the command unconditionally without permission from his own court, declined it altogether under present circumstances, as being inconsistent with those operations which he foresaw would soon become necessary for the British army. He had intelligence that a council of war held at Salamanca had recommended an attack upon Ciudad Rodrigo : the loss of that place would cut off the only communication which the Spanish government had with the northern provinces, and would give the French secure possession of Old Castille, and probably draw after it the loss of Almeida. It would, therefore, be incumbent upon him to make exertions for relieving Ciudad Rodrigo. The cabildo of that city, just at this time when Lord

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Wellington was contemplating their approaching danger, and how best to succour them, gave an example of the spirit which too many of these provincial authorities displayed toward the British army. 100,000 pounds of biscuit had been ordered there, and paid for by a British commissary ; and when Marshal Beresford sent for it, that it might be deposited in the magazines at Almeida, the cabildo seized 30,000 pounds of this quantity, upon the ground that debts due to that city by Sir John Moore's army had not been paid, . . although part of the business of the commissary who was sent to Ciudad Rodrigo was to settle these accounts, and discharge the debts in question.

*Lord Wel-  
lington  
withdraws  
to Badajoz.*

This was a specimen of that ill-will towards England which prevailed in many places among persons of this rank ; and Marquis Wellesley perceived that such persons, if not favoured by the government, were certainly not discountenanced. The same spirit was manifested but too plainly by the persons employed about Cuesta's army. While they were professing that the English army should be served in preference to their own people (even to the exclusion of them, if needful), they never offered to supply a single cart or mule, or any means of transport from their own abundance. Lord Wellington, for want of such means, was compelled to leave his ammunition behind him, and then no difficulty was found in transporting it to the Spanish stores. No difficulty was found in transporting

the bridge of boats from Almaraz to Badajoz ; yet if these means of transport, with which the Spanish army was always abundantly provided, had been shared with the British army, many of the difficulties under which it suffered would have been relieved, and its separation, says Lord Wellington, certainly would not have taken place when it did. The distress which his men suffered would not have been felt in an equal degree by the French, or by any people who understood how to manage their food. Meat they had always in sufficiency, and their chief want was of bread, . . they were not ingenious enough to make a comfortable meal without it, though flour or rice was served out in its stead. But the want of food for the cavalry, and of means of transport, which actually rendered the British army inefficient, could not be remedied by any dexterity of the men, or any foresight of the general, and is wholly imputable to the conduct of the Spanish generals and the Spanish government. Spain was grievously injured by this unpardonable misconduct. The English ministry were at this very time proposing to increase Lord Wellington's force to 80,000 men, provided the supreme command were vested in the British general, and effectual arrangements made for their supply. But in the present state of things, both the Marquis and his brother perceived that any co-operation with the Spanish armies would only draw on a repetition of the same disasters. The intent was therefore abandoned,

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*Expedition  
to Walche-  
ren.*

and Lord Wellington at the beginning of September, proceeded to Badajoz, stationing his army, part within the Portugueze frontier, and part on the Spanish territory, in a position which would menace the flank and rear of the French if they advanced toward Andalusia.

While the allied armies were thus rendered inefficient, not by the skill or strength of the enemy, but by the inexperience and incapacity of the Spanish authorities, the mightiest force that had ever left the British shores was wasted in a miserable expedition to the Scheldt, and upon objects so insulated, and unimportant at that crisis, that if they had been completely attained, success would have been nugatory. Had that force been landed in the north of Germany, as the Austrian government proposed, it has since been known, that what Schill did with his single regiment, would have been done by Blucher and the whole Prussian army. Marquis Wellesley had always disapproved of its destination, looking upon the plan as at once absurd and ruinous. Destructive to the last degree it proved, from the unwholesome nature of the country to which it was sent : a cause which of all others might with most certainty have been foreseen, and yet by some fatality seems to have been overlooked by all who were concerned in planning the expedition or consulted upon it. The only consolation, if consolation it may be deemed, for the misemployment of such a force, was in the knowledge that, owing to the state of

the Spanish counsels, and the temper of the Spanish generals, it could not have acted in Spain.

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The British government meantime had to struggle with difficulties at home as well as abroad, and of the most unexpected kind. During the former part of the year parliament was occupied with an inquiry into the conduct of the Duke of York as commander-in-chief, which ended in his resigning the office. The circumstances which were disclosed rendered this resignation becoming and necessary; but perhaps there never was another instance in which the reaction of public opinion was at once so strongly and so justly manifested. For when the agitation was subsided which had been raised, not so much by the importance of the business itself, as by the unremitting efforts of a set of libellers the vilest and most venomous of their kind, it was then perceived that the accusation had originated in intrigue and malice; that the abuses which were brought to light were far less than had been supposed to exist, and that in proving them it had been proved also that the greatest improvements had been introduced into that department by his Royal Highness, and that the general administration was excellent. From that time, therefore, the Duke acquired a popularity which he had never before possessed; and the efforts which had been made with persevering malignity to ruin him in the good opinion of the nation, served

*Inquiry into the conduct of the Duke of York.*

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nistry.*

only to establish him there upon the strongest and surest grounds.

This inquiry had occupied a full third of the whole session, to the grievous interruption of public business, and the more grievous excitement of the people, even to the extinction in most minds of all other public interest whatever. The ministry meantime had other causes of disquiet, which did not transpire till the session had closed. Mismanaged arrangements for the removal of Lord Castlereagh from the war-department, induced him to challenge Mr. Canning, with whom the wish for his removal originated, but who in the course of the affair had been as ill used as himself. Both parties in consequence resigned; the Duke of Portland did the same, compelled by the state of his health, for he died almost immediately afterwards, and thus the administration was broken up. Lord Liverpool, the only remaining secretary of state, performed the business of the other two departments, while the remaining members of the cabinet looked about in dismay, and almost in despair, for new colleagues and for a new head.

*Sept. 23.* Their situation appeared so forlorn that official letters were addressed to Earl Grey and Lord Grenville, informing them that his Majesty had authorized Earl Liverpool and Mr. Perceval to communicate with their lordships for the purpose of forming an extended and combined administration, and requesting them to come to town, that as little time as possible might be

lost in forwarding so important an object. Earl Grey replied, that had his Majesty been pleased to signify he had any commands for him personally, he should not have lost a moment in showing his duty by prompt obedience to his royal pleasure; but when it was proposed that he should communicate with the existing ministers, for the purpose of forming a combined administration with them, he should be wanting in duty to the King, and in fairness to them, if he did not at once declare that such a union was, as far as it regarded him under the then circumstances, impossible: this being the answer which he was under the necessity of giving, his appearance in London could be of no advantage; and it might possibly be of detriment to the country, if, in consequence of a less decisive answer, any farther delay should take place in the formation of a settled government.

Lord Grenville, who was in Cornwall, replied, he should lose no time in repairing to town, and begged leave to defer all observations upon the business till his arrival. The day after his arrival he sent an answer conformable to that of Earl Grey, declining the proposed communication, because it could not be productive of any public advantage. "I trust," he added, "I need not say that this opinion is neither founded in any sentiment of personal hostility, nor in a desire of unnecessarily prolonging political differences. To compose, not to inflame, the divisions of the empire, has always been my

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anxious wish, and is now more than ever the duty of every loyal subject ; but my accession to the existing administration could not in any respect contribute to this object, nor could it be considered in any other light than as a dereliction of public principle. This answer, which I must have given to any such proposal, if made while the government was yet entire, cannot be varied by the retreat of some of its members. My objections are not personal, they apply to the principle of the government itself, and to the circumstances which attended its appointment."

Nothing but extreme necessity could have induced the remaining ministers to make these overtures ; and when their advances were thus rejected, great hopes were entertained by the adverse party, that they would not be able to keep their ground as an administration. It was even affirmed and believed that some of the highest offices were offered to different persons, and that none could be found to accept them. The only hope of the ministry rested upon Marquis Wellesley ; hints were thrown out that he would not join any arrangement in which Mr. Canning was not included ; this opinion, however, proved erroneous, the Marquis accepted the office which Mr. Canning vacated, the Earl of Liverpool was transferred from the home to the war department, and the situation which he had vacated was filled by Mr. Ryder. Lord Palmerstone was made secretary at war in the

room of Sir James Pulteney, and Mr. Perceval took the place of the Duke of Portland, . . . thus uniting in himself, as Mr. Pitt and Mr. Addington had done before him, the offices of first lord of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer. The loss of the Duke was only that of a name ; that of Mr. Canning was greatly regretted, as was also the secession of Mr. Huskisson, who resigned his seat at the treasury at the same time ; but though the ministry was weakened by their departure, it was well understood that the opposition would derive no aid from them ; and, on the whole, government was thought to have gained by these changes more than it had lost, in consequence of the high reputation of Marquis Wellesley, and the almost general desire of the nation to see him in administration. His brother, Mr. Henry Wellesley, was appointed to succeed him as ambassador to Spain.

The disposable force of the enemy in Spain at this time was estimated at 125,000 men, well provided with cavalry and artillery, exclusive of the garrisons in Barcelona and the strong places upon the Pyrenean frontier. Of these, about 35,000 were employed in Arragon and Catalonia, the rest were in the two Castilles and Extremadura, 70,000 being in the field under Victor, Soult, Ney, Sebastiani, and Mortier, . . . the remainder employed in garrisons, and in keeping up the communication between the different places in their possession. Sick and wounded were not included, and an allowance was made

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*Disposition  
of the  
French and  
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armies.*

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for the loss of 10,000 men at Talavera. At the lowest estimate, this was the number of the enemy; the force of the Spaniards was miserably inferior. Blake, after the rout at Belchite, had reassembled a small army, scarcely exceeding 6000 men, with which he was endeavouring, from time to time, to relieve Gerona. Noroña had 15,000 men in Galicia; but a tenth part of these were without arms, and he had neither cavalry nor artillery. The Duke del Parque had 9000 men at Ciudad Rodrigo, and Eguia and Venegas had about 50,000 in their two armies. But the inefficient state of these troops had been lamentably proved; both cavalry and infantry were for the most part undisciplined, and the latter neither properly clothed nor accoutred, notwithstanding large supplies of all things needful had been sent from England.

*Neediness  
of the in-  
trusive go-  
vernment.*

The Intruder meantime, now that immediate danger was averted, had leisure to feel the wretched state to which his subserviency to a wicked brother had reduced him. He was, indeed, in possession of Madrid, and half the kingdom was overrun by his troops; but how were those troops to be paid, or how was he to support the expenses of his court and government? . . . Whatever might be the issue of the war in the Peninsula, the vast colonial empire of Spain could never be his, and the resources which still continued to arrive from thence were enjoyed by the legitimate government. Where-

ever his authority extended, trade was at an end, the people were impoverished, and the sources of revenue destroyed. The first-fruits of plunder also had now been consumed. Andalusia, indeed, offered a harvest as yet untouched, and which would ere long be at his disposal ; but till the opportunity arrived, it was necessary to glean whatever had been spared in the former pillage. An edict was issued, denouncing severe punishment against those who should secrete papers or effects belonging to the suppressed monasteries, and offering a reward for the discovery of such property, proportionate to its value. He had previously confiscated the property of all Spaniards in foreign countries, who should not forthwith return in obedience to his command ; he now called upon those in whose hands property, papers, or effects had been left by others when forsaking their place of residence, to deliver them up for the use of the treasury. Any persons buying or selling gold, silver, or jewels, which had belonged to a suppressed convent, or to an insurgent, were to be severely punished ; and those who assisted the insurgents in any manner were to be put to death. Another decree sequestered the revenues of all archbishops and bishops, and appointed pensions from the state instead. Another commanded all persons possessing plate to the amount of more than ten dollars, except in plates, knives, and spoons, to give in an account thereof within three days ; the mint was immediately to pay a

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fourth of its value, and the remainder was promised within four months. All plate which should be concealed after this edict was to be forfeited, and a fourth of its value given to the informer; and silversmiths were forbidden to purchase any articles in silver, except such as were permitted to be in use by the present decree.

*Measures  
of severity.*

These measures proved the neediness of the intrusive government. Its atrocious character had already been amply demonstrated; if farther proof were needed, it was to be found in a decree by which all persons whose sons were serving in what it called the insurgent armies were required to furnish a man to the Intruder's service for every son, or a proportionate sum of money; the elder brothers, or other nearest relations or guardians of those who had no father, were subjected to the same law; and those who had no money either for procuring the substitute or paying the fine were to be imprisoned, or sent into France. But it was reserved for this government to introduce a new species of barbarity, which had never before been heard of in war. Kellermann, whom the English had rescued with such difficulty from the vengeance of the Portuguese at Lisbon, was at this time governor-general of what the French called Upper Spain, that is, of the provinces of Salamanca, Zamora, Toro, Leon, Valladolid, Palencia, Burgos, Soria, Santander, Biscay, Guipuzcoa, and Alava. Throughout this whole tract of country he

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*Keller-  
mann's  
edict.*

placed all horses and mares above a certain height in requisition for the French armies, ordering them to be taken to the respective country towns, and there delivered for that purpose ; and every horse or mare below the size named, or under thirty months old, with every mare that should be three months gone with foal, was to have the left eye put out by the owner, and to be in other ways rendered unfit for military service. A fine of four times the value of the beast was to be exacted from any one who disobeyed this edict, and all French officers were charged to see it carried into execution. Nothing can more strikingly evince their moral degradation, than that their general should have ordered them to enforce the execution of an edict like this. These were the measures pursued in the name of a King who was represented as being equally philosophic and humane, who was to remedy all the evils of long misrule, to relieve the people from all grievances, restore Spain to its ancient prosperity, and confer upon it a happiness which it had never before enjoyed ! In an unhappy hour had Joseph's ministers entered his service, persuading, or seeking to persuade, themselves that they might benefit their country by giving their countenance to a perfidious and odious usurpation. The ablest men who have ever endeavoured to do good by evil means, have felt their best intentions frustrated in the attempt. These ministers, worthy, as under other circumstances they might

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have been of their station, found themselves now the mere instrument of that very military power which they had flattered themselves that they should be allowed to direct. Still, however, seeking some excuse to their own hearts, and to posterity, they took advantage of the time for attempting alterations, which would have been most salutary if the nation had been prepared for them, . . . but for which it was so little prepared, that the premature attempt only attached the Spaniards the more to the very evils from which it was intended to deliver them. One sweeping decree abolished all the regular orders in Spain, whether monastic, mendicant, or clerical; the individuals belonging to them were ordered to quit their convents within fifteen days, resume their secular habits, and repair to their native places, where pensions were promised them. It was certain that the intrusive government had neither the means nor the intention of paying these pensions; but the whole property of the suppressed orders was seized for the use of the state. The reason assigned for this measure in the preamble to the decree was, that these communities had taken a hostile part against the government, which, while it thus abolished them, wished to recompense those individuals who had conducted themselves well. Better reasons, Urquijo and his colleagues well knew, would only have exasperated a people whose souls were thoroughly enslaved to the superstitions which debased

them ; but the cause which was thus assigned exasperated them as much, and this feeling was kept up and disseminated every where by the ejected members, who, wherever they went, excited the compassion of their countrymen and inflamed their hatred of the intrusive government. Some prudence as well as humanity was shown, by exempting the nuns from this decree ; they were subjected to the ordinary, and forbidden to receive pupils. The military orders were abolished also, except that of the Golden Fleece, and the one which the intrusive government had itself instituted. This was needlessly offending the national pride, which was in like manner wounded by the removal of the tax raised under the name of the *Voto de Santiago* ; the relief, even had circumstances allowed it to be felt, would not have compensated for the outrage upon Spanish feeling. In taking away the privilege of sanctuary, and suppressing all ecclesiastical jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases, the ministers acted as they would have wished to do, had they held their offices by a better tenure ; and in making strangulation the mode of death for all criminals of whatever rank, and decreeing that degradation was implied in the sentence. But when an edict affected to abolish all dignities and titles which had not been conferred by the Intruder, and required the traitorous nobles in his service to receive from him a confirmation of the peerage which:

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*The Central  
Junta an-  
nounces that  
the Cortes  
will be as-  
sembled.*

they had disgraced, the futility of the decree only provoked contempt.

Joseph's ministers had leisure for legislative speculations and for dreams of reformation. The real business of government was not in their hands; in all essential points they were mere ciphers, and seemed to feel that they were so. The Central Junta was in a situation as much more trying as it was more honourable. The difficulties and embarrassments of every kind with which they were beset might have confused heads more experienced in affairs of state; and their exertions under the pressure of immediate danger left them little time for those measures of effectual reform, which Spain so greatly needed, but which were looked for more eagerly by the British nation than by the Spaniards, for as a people the Spaniards were contented with their old system, and attached to it even with all its evils and abominations. The general wish in England was that the Cortes should be convened, and this was desired as sincerely by the British government as by Jovellanos and those other noble minded Spaniards who hoped through regular and constitutional means to restore the liberty and the prosperity of their country. It was long after the installation of the Junta before the disasters of the day allowed them leisure for thinking of the morrow. To this their delay in taking measures for assembling the Cortes must be

ascribed, more than to their love of power, which they were ill able to wield, or of the patronage which they unworthily bestowed. But to these motives the delay was imputed; and by not following the advice of Jovellanos when the act would have appeared spontaneous and graceful, they lost the opportunity of obtaining that popularity which even the semblance of disinterestedness is sure to acquire. It was not till eight months after their installation that a decree came forth for re-establishing the legal representation of the monarchy in its ancient Cortes. The time was left indefinite, but the edict said it would be convoked in the course of the ensuing year, or earlier, if circumstances should permit.

The language of the Supreme Junta on this, as on every other occasion, was worthy of the position in which the national government was placed, and of the principles on which it professed to act. "The Spanish people," they said, "must leave to their posterity an inheritance worthy of the sacrifices which were made for obtaining it. The Supreme Junta had never lost sight of this object; and the progress of the enemy, which had hitherto occupied their whole attention, rendered more bitter the reflection, that all their disasters were solely owing to the disuse of those institutions which, in happier times, secured the welfare and the strength of the state. The ambition of some, and the indolence of others, had reduced those institu-

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tions to nothing ; and the Junta, from the moment of its installation, solemnly bound itself to restore them. The time was now arrived for this great work. Desirous, therefore, that the nation should appear with the dignity due to its heroic efforts ; that the rights of the people should be placed beyond the reach of encroachments ; and that the sources of public felicity should run freely as soon as the war ceased, and repair whatever inveterate arbitrary power had scorched, or the present devastation had destroyed, the Junta decreed, that the Cortes should be re-established, and would immediately proceed to consider the method of convening it ; for which end it would nominate a committee of five of its members. It would also investigate, in order to propose them to the nation assembled in Cortes, the means of supporting the holy war in which they were engaged ; of insuring the observance of their fundamental laws ; of meliorating the legislation and abolishing the abuses which had crept into it ; of collecting and administering the revenue, and of reforming the system of public education. And to combine the information necessary for such discussions, it would consult the councils, provincial Juntas, tribunals, magistracies, corporations, bishops, and universities, and the opinion of intelligent and enlightened persons."

*Declaration  
which was  
first pro-  
posed.*

A declaration in stronger terms had been submitted to the Junta, and rejected by them at the instigation of Mr. Frere. "Spaniards,"

it was there said, "it is three ages since the laws on which the nation founded its defence against tyranny have been destroyed. Our fathers did not know how to preserve the liberty which had been bequeathed to them; and although all the provinces of Spain successively struggled to defend it, evil stars rendered their efforts useless. The laws, from that time forward, have been only an expression more or less tyrannical, or beneficent, of a particular will. Providence, as if to punish the loss of that prerogative of free men, has paralysed our valour, arrested the progress of our intellect, and impeded our civilization, till we have come to that condition, that an insolent tyrant formed the project of subduing the greatest nation of the globe, without reckoning upon its will, and even despising its existence. In vain has the prince sometimes attempted to remedy some of the evils of the state: buildings cannot be erected on sand, and without fundamental and constituted laws, it is useless for the philosopher in his study, or the statesman in the theatre of business, to exert himself for the good of the people. The best projects are not put in execution, or not carried through. Good suggestions are followed by evil ones; economy and order, by prodigality and rapine; a prudent and mild minister, by an avaricious and foolish favourite; and thus the ship of the state floats without sails and helm, till, as has happened to the Spanish monarchy, it is dashed to pieces on

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a rock. How, but by the re-establishment of freedom, could that blood be recompensed which flows in every part of the Peninsula; those sacrifices which Spanish loyalty is offering every instant; that moral resistance, as universal as it is sublime, which disconcerts our enemies, and renders them hopeless even in the midst of their victories? When this dreadful contest is concluded, the Spaniard shall say proudly to himself, 'My fathers left me slavery and wretchedness for my inheritance; I leave to my descendants liberty and glory.' Spaniards, this is the feeling which, by reflection in some, and by instinct in all, animates you now; and it shall not be defrauded of its expectations. Our detractors say that we are fighting to defend old abuses, and the inveterate vices of our corrupted government; let them know that your struggle is for the happiness, as well as the independence of your country; that you will not depend henceforward on the uncertain will or the variable temper of a single man; nor continue to be the plaything of a court without justice, under the control of an insolent favourite, or a capricious woman; but that on the edifice of your ancient laws you will rear a barrier between despotism and your sacred rights. This barrier consists in a constitution to aid and support the monarch when he is just, and to restrain him when he follows evil councils. Without a constitution all reform is precarious, all prosperity uncertain; without

it the people are no more than flocks of slaves, put in motion at the order of a will, frequently unjust, and always unrestrained; without it the forces of the whole society, which should procure the greatest advantages for all its members, are employed exclusively to satisfy the ambition, or satiate the frenzy of a few, or perhaps of one."

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When this paper was communicated to Mr. Frere, he saw serious objections, which he stated to Garay, and which the Junta, though they would otherwise have published the proclamation, readily admitted. That ambassador perceived, more clearly perhaps than any other person at that time, the danger to be apprehended from convoking a legislative assembly in a nation altogether unprepared for it by habits, feelings, education, or general knowledge. He considered it a delicate and dangerous point in every respect, and said, "that if the decision of the question were left in his hand, notwithstanding the necessity for widening the basis of the government, the failure of all the political experiments which had been made in these latter times, and the impossibility which had been found (by a fatality peculiar to the present age) of forming a permanent establishment, even in affairs less essential than the formation of a free constitution for a great nation, would make him waver. But taking the decision for granted, he thought the man-

*Objections  
by Mr.  
Frere.*

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ner in which it was proposed to announce it likely to produce bad effects in Spain; and he could venture," he said, "to assure D. Martin de Garay, that it would undoubtedly create them in England. If the Spaniards had indeed passed three centuries under arbitrary government, they ought not to forget that it was the price which they paid for having conquered and peopled the fairest portion of the world, and that the integrity of that immense power rested solely upon these two words, Religion and the King. If the old constitution had been lost by the conquest of America, the first object should be to recover it; but in such a manner as not to lose what had cost so much in the acquisition: and for this reason, they ought to avoid, as a political poison, every enunciation of general principles, the application of which it would be impossible to limit or qualify, even when the Negroes and Indians should quote it in favour of themselves. And allowing that a bad exchange had been made in bartering the ancient national liberty for the glory and extension of the Spanish name; allowing that the error should at all hazards be done away; even though it were so," Mr. Frere said, "it did not appear becoming the character of a well-educated person to pass censures upon the conduct of his forefathers, or to complain of what he may have lost by their negligence or prodigality, still less so if it

were done in the face of the world; and what should be said of a nation who should do this publicly, and after mature deliberation?"

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This was true foresight,—and yet the English ambassador approached Charybdis in his fear of Scylla. He spoke to the Spaniards of Religion and the King; in England the truest and most enlightened lovers of liberty can have no better rallying words; in Spain those words had for three hundred years meant the inquisition and an absolute monarch, whose ministers, so long as they could retain his favour, governed according to their own will and pleasure, unchecked by any constitutional control. The government did not obtain by their decree for convoking the Cortes the popularity which they had perhaps expected. The measure had been long delayed, and therefore was supposed to have been unwillingly resolved on. So much, indeed, had been expected from the Central Junta, that no possible wisdom on their part, no possible success, could have answered the unreasonable demand. The disappointment of the nation was in proportion to its hopes, and the government became equally the object of suspicion and contempt. Some of the members had large estates in those provinces which were occupied by the French, and it was suspected that where their property was, there their hearts were also. Their subsequent conduct proved how greatly they were injured by this distrust. They were not censured for their first disasters, which the ablest men under like circumstances

*Unpopularity of the Junta.*



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could not have averted. Had they obtained accurate intelligence of the strength and movements of the enemy when Buonaparte entered Spain; had they exerted themselves as much in disciplining troops as in raising and embodying them, and had they supplied them with regularity and promptitude; it would not have been possible to have stopped the progress of such a force. Something was allowed for the confidence which the battle of Baylen had inspired, and for the enthusiasm of the people, which the government had partaken. Neither would the nation have been disposed to condemn, even if it had perceived, errors which arose from the national character. But when, after the bitter experience of twelve whole months, no measures had been adopted for improving the discipline of the armies, or supplying them in the field, the incapacity of the Junta became glaring, and outcries against them were heard on all sides.

*Their difficulties and errors.*

One of the weightiest errors for which they were censured was for not exerting themselves more effectually to bring the whole strength of the country against the invaders. They had promised to raise 500,000 men and 50,000 cavalry. Granada was the only province which supplied its full proportion, and Granada even exceeded it; its contingent was about 28,000, whereas it furnished nearly forty. But this depended more upon the provincial Juntas than upon the central government, whose decrees were of no avail in those parts which the enemy possessed, and were ill observed in others, where

the local administrations, from disgust, or jealousy, or indolence, or incapacity, seemed to look on as spectators of the dreadful drama, rather than to perform their parts in it, as men and as Spaniards. Neither is it to the want of numbers that their defeats were to be attributed; there were at all times men enough in the field; arms, equipments, and discipline were wanting. It is unjust to judge of the exertions of the Spanish Junta by those of the National Convention in France, who had the whole wealth and strength of a populous and rich country at their absolute disposal, and who began the revolutionary war with officers, and tacticians, and statesmen capable of wielding the mighty means which were put into their hands. The fault of the Junta was in relying too much upon numbers and bravery, and too little upon their fortresses. The general under whom the great captain Gonzalo de Cordova learnt the art of war had left them a lesson which they might profitably have remembered. He used to say, that fortresses ought to be opposed to the impatience and fury of the French, and that the place for stationing raw troops was behind walls and ramparts.

The most important errors which the Junta had hitherto committed were, the delay in convoking the Cortes, and their conduct towards Sir Arthur Wellesley's army; but the national character contributed in no slight degree to both. For it was not the known aversion of

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Florida Blanca to the name of a representative assembly, nor the fears of some of the Junta, nor the love of power in others, which protracted the convocation of the Cortes, so much as their reverential adherence to established forms. This was evident in Jovellanos himself, who regarded it as equally profane and dangerous to approach this political ark of the covenant, without scrupulously observing all the ceremonies and solemnities which the law prescribed. Precedents on points of this kind are not to be found in Spain as they are in England. Antiquaries were to be consulted, archives examined, old regulations adapted to new circumstances,—and this when the enemy was at the gates. The defect may well be pardoned, because of the virtues with which it was connected. Had the Spaniards regarded with less veneration the deeds and the institutions of their ancestors, they would never have supported that struggle which will be the wonder of succeeding ages. Their conduct toward the English army sprang from a worse fault; from that pride which made them prone to impose upon others and upon themselves a false opinion of their strength. It is the national failing, for which they have ever been satirized, by their own writers as well as by other nations. They will rather promise and disappoint, than acknowledge their inability; of this, their history for the last two centuries affords abundant examples; they had yet to learn, that perfect sin-

cerity is as much due to an ally as to a confessor. In many cases the government was itself deceived; the same false point of honour prevailing in every department, from the lowest to the highest, it received and acted upon exaggerated statements and calculations; but in others, it cannot be denied, that pride led to the last degree of meanness, and that promises were held out to the English general, which those who made them must have known it was impossible to perform.

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Yet it must be admitted that the errors of the Junta were more attributable to the character of the nation than of the individuals; and those individuals were placed in circumstances of unexampled difficulty. Four-and-thirty men, most of them strangers to each other, and unaccustomed to public business, were brought together to govern a nation in the most perilous crisis of its history, without any thing to direct them except their own judgement, and almost without any other means than what the patriotism of the people could supply. They had troops indeed, but undisciplined, unofficered, unprovided, half armed, and half clothed. The old system of government was broken up, the new one was yet to be formed. They had neither commissariat nor treasury; the first donations and imposts were exhausted; so also were the supplies which England had liberally given, and those from America had not yet arrived. Added to these difficulties, and worse than all, was that

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dreadful state of moral and social anarchy into which the nation had been thrown, and which was such that no man knew in whom he could confide. To poison food or water in time of war is a practice which all people, who are not absolute savages, have pronounced infamous by common consent; but it is a light crime compared to the means which Buonaparte employed for the subjugation of Spain,—means which poisoned the well-springs of social order, and loosened the very joints and fibres of society. Morla, when he betrayed his country, committed an act of treason against human nature. The evil had been great before, but when a Judas Iscariot had been found in Morla during the agony of Spain, in whom could the people confide? “Suspicion,” says Jovellanos, “and hatred were conceived and spread with frightful facility. How many generals, nobles, prelates, magistrates, and lawyers, were regarded with distrust, either because of their old relations with Godoy, or because they were connected with some of the new partizans of the tyranny; or for the weakness, or indecision, or ambiguity of their conduct; or for the calumnies and insinuations which rivalry and envy excited against them! It was considered as a crime to have gone to Bayonne, to have remained at Madrid, or resided in other places which were occupied by the intrusive government; to have submitted to swear allegiance to it, to have obeyed its orders, or to have suffered even com-

pulsively its yoke and its contempt. What reputation was secure? Who was not exposed to the attacks of envy, to the imputations of calumny, and to the violence of an agitated populace?"

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From this state of things it necessarily arose, that the Junta acted in constant fear and suspicion of those whom they employed. Their sense of weakness and their love of power increased the evil. Fearing the high spirit of Alburquerque, and the influence which rank and talents conjoined would give to his deserved popularity among the soldiers, they cramped him in a subordinate command, while they trusted those armies which were the hope of Spain to Cuesta, because they were afraid of offending him, and to Venegas, for the opposite reason, that they were sure of his obsequious submission. Some odium they incurred by permitting a trade with towns which the enemy occupied. For the sake, as was alleged, of those Spaniards who were compelled to live under the yoke, and also for the advantage of the colonies, they had granted licences for conveying sugar, cacao, and bark, to those parts of the kingdom. These licences were only to be trusted to persons of known and approved patriotism, who were likewise to be strictly watched, and liable to be searched upon any suspicion. The weakness of such a concession in such a war, as well as the obvious facility which it afforded to the French and their traitorous partizans, excited

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just reprehension; and at the close of the year the Junta found it necessary to revoke their edict, acknowledging that, in spite of all precautions, it was found prejudicial to the public safety. Some of the members were suspected of enhancing the price of necessaries for the army, by their own secret monopolies; others were said to be surrounded by venal instruments, through whom alone they were accessible. These imputations were probably ill-founded or exaggerated; certain, however, it is, that never had any government fewer friends. Men of the most opposite principles were equally disaffected toward it. Its very defenders had no confidence in its stability, and were ready to forsake it. They who dreaded any diminution of the regal authority, could not forgive its popular origin; they who aspired to lay the foundation of a new and happier order of things, were discontented, because the measures which were taken towards the reformation of the state were slowly, and, as they deemed, reluctantly adopted. Those wretches who were sold to France were the enemies of any government which resisted the usurpation; and those whose timid natures, or short-sighted selfishness, disposed them to submission, naturally regarded it with dislike, because it delayed the subjection of the country. Among the people, who were actuated by none of these feelings, it was sufficient to render the Junta unpopular that it was unfortunate. The times rendered them suspicious; their own con-

duct and their power made them obnoxious to many; and their ill-fortune, more than their errors, made them disliked by all.

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Influenced by some of these motives, and perhaps in no little degree by jealousy, the Junta of Seville were particularly hostile to the government, and a plan was formed in that city for overthrowing it: the members were to be seized, and some of the most obnoxious transported to Manilla in a ship which was prepared for the purpose. Some regiments had been gained over, and it is said even the guards of the Junta; but as the persons who designed this revolution had for their direct object the good of Spain, they considered it a mark of confidence due to Great Britain to make the English ambassador acquainted with their purpose; for in fact, so far were the Spanish people from regarding the interference of Great Britain with jealousy, that they were disappointed because their ally did not interfere more frequently, and with more effect. Marquis Wellesley, of whom it had been said by Mr. Whitbread that he would, if opportunity should offer, take Spain and Portugal as Buonaparte had done, had now an opportunity of showing in what manner he thought himself bound to act by a government which he knew to be weak, and suspected to be treacherous. At the very time when this foul imputation was brought against him in parliament, he gave to that government just so much information of its danger, as, without compromising the safety of

*Scheme for  
overthrow-  
ing them.*



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any persons concerned, enabled the Junta to prevent the intended insurrection.

The general wish was less for the convocation of the Cortes, than for the establishment of a regency, from which more unanimity and more vigour was expected, than from the present divided council. The people of Cadiz said the fate of Spain was in Marquis Wellesley's hands, that he ought to remove the Junta, and establish an energetic government. Those persons who respected hereditary claims would have had the Archbishop of Toledo appointed regent, as being the only Bourbon in the country ; but he was young ; and what weighed against him more than the want of either talents or character, was, that he was believed to be governed by his sister, the wife of Godoy. Others looked to Romana, knowing his dislike to the Junta, and hoping that he would assume the government himself, or intrust it to able hands. Another project was to appoint both these personages regents, with the Duke del Infantado, and two other colleagues. It was thought that the army would gladly have seen the supreme authority vested in one of their own body, either Romana or Infantado. But both these noblemen were free from any such ambition ; and Montijo, who was always intriguing for power, was so well known, that he was the last person whom any party would have trusted.

*Commission  
appointed  
by the  
Junta.*

The warning which had thus been given was not lost upon the Junta, and they attended to

the representations which accompanied it; they knew their weakness, and perceived their danger; admitted that the existing government was not suited to the state of affairs, and nominated a commission for the purpose of inquiring in what manner it might best be replaced. Romana was included in the commission, and upon this occasion he delivered in a paper, which, if they had required additional proof of his hostility, and their own unstable tenure, would amply have afforded it. "There were three cases," he said, "either of which ought to produce a change in the system of a government: When a nation, which ought only to obey, doubts the legitimacy of the authority to which it is to submit; when such authority begins to lose its influence; when it is not only prejudicial to the public weal, but contrary to the principles of the constitution. The existing government was objectionable upon all these grounds: it was founded upon a democratic principle of representation, inconsistent with the pure monarchical system of Spain, and with the heroic loyalty of the Spaniards, and which, if it continued, would subvert the monarchy. As often as he meditated upon this subject, he doubted the lawfulness of the existing government; and this opinion was general in the provinces through which he had passed. Among the services which he had endeavoured to perform for his king and country, it was not the least that he had yielded obedience to the orders of this government, and made the constituted

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*Romana's  
address.*

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authorities in Leon, Asturias, and Galicia do the same ; considering this absolutely necessary to preserve the nation from anarchy. A government, though illegal, might secure the happiness of the people, if it deserved their confidence, and they respected its authority ; but the existing government had lost its authority. The people, who judge of measures by the effects which they see produced, complain that our armies are weak for want of energy in the government ; that no care has been taken for supplying them ; that they have not seen the promised accounts of the public expenditure, and how the sums which have arrived from America, those which our generous allies have given, the rents of the crown, and the voluntary contributions, have been expended : they look in vain for necessary reforms ; they see that employments are not given to men of true merit, and true lovers of their country ; that some members, instead of manifesting their desire of the public good, by disinterestedness, seek to preserve their authority for their own advantage ; that others confer lucrative and honourable employments on their own dependents and countrymen ; that for this sole reason ecclesiastical offices have been filled up, the rents of which ought to have been applied to the necessities of the state ; that that unity which is necessary in the government, is not to be found, many of the Junta caring only for the interests of their particular provinces, as if they were members of some body different from that

of the Spanish monarchy ; that they had not only confirmed the military appointments made by the provincial Juntas, without examining the merits of the persons appointed, but had even assigned recompences to many who were destitute of all military knowledge, having never seen service, nor performed any of those duties which were confided to them ; that the Junta, divided into sections, dispatched business in matters altogether foreign to their profession, and in which they were utterly unversed, instead of referring them to the competent and appropriate ministers ; that horses taken from their owners, instead of being sent to the armies, were dying for hunger on the dry sea-marshes ; finally, that many of the most important branches of administration were in the hands of men, suspicious, because of their conduct from the commencement of the public misfortunes, and because they were the creatures of that infamous favourite, who had been the author of all the general misery. Such," said Romana, "are the complaints of the people : there is but one step to disobedience ; the enemy will profit by the first convulsion, and anarchy or servitude will then be the alternative."

The Marquis then stated, that the time for which some provinces had appointed their representatives to the Junta was expired ; that others had empowered them not to exercise the sovereign authority, but to constitute a government which might represent the monarch : in

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neither case could these provinces be expected to acknowledge an authority which they had never conferred. The commission, he proceeded to say, had proposed that the Junta should reduce itself to five persons, in whom the executive power should be vested ; and that in rotation each member of the existing body should enter into this supreme executive council, which should also preside over the Cortes when it was assembled. This project discovered the love of power in the Junta more unequivocally than any other part of their conduct. What Romana proposed in its stead was as prudent in itself as it was inconsistent with his previous positions. After maintaining that the powers of the existing government were from the first illegal, and that even such as they were, they had, for part of the members, expired, he recommended nevertheless that this government should, as representing legitimately or illegitimately the Cortes, appoint a regent, or a council of regency, consisting of three or of five persons, especially advising, as a proof of generosity and patriotism, that they should nominate none of their own body. A Junta should be formed, under the title of the Permanent Deputation of the Realm, to represent the Cortes till the Cortes should be assembled ; it should consist of five members and a procurador-general, and one of these members should always be chosen from their American brethren, as forming an integral part of the nation. But the Cortes should be assembled with

as little delay as circumstances would permit, and then no laws should be passed, or contributions imposed, without its consent. "If," said he, "I have in some cases connected the supreme power with the nation, I have done no more than revive the constitutional principles of the Spanish monarchy, which have been stifled by the despotism of its kings and their ministers." However hostile to the principles of civil liberty the first positions of Romana appeared, the most zealous friends of freedom might have been contented with his conclusions.

"Ought we," said he, "to fear that an adventurer, who usurps the throne of Ferdinand, should appear among us, if we had a government like this, emanating from the consent of the people, from submission to the true God, and from the necessity of our mournful and perilous situation? Would our armies then be defective in numbers, and in subordination and discipline? would they be so filled with ignorant and cowardly officers, so unprovided with food, so irregularly paid, and so destitute of all equipments? would men be appointed generals, because they would support the persons who appointed them, or because they knew how to command an army and how to save the country? With such a government, the nation would have invincible armies, the armies would have generals, the troops would be officered, and the soldiers would learn subordination and discipline. When Spain shall see

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that auspicious day, I shall think it the first day of her hope, and the most happy of her glorious revolution. Such," he continued, "is my opinion; but I ought not to forget that I have publicly controverted it by my actions. For who sustained your sovereign authority in the army and province which I governed? Galicia, whom didst thou obey? Didst thou respect in me any power but that of the Central Junta, or did I consent that thou shouldst separate thyself from a government which I was sanctioning by my own obedience? Asturias, didst not thou see the powerful arm upraised which thou hadst implored so earnestly, and the blow of its power fall upon a Junta, which, after having acknowledged the sovereignty of the Central, and received from it succours, of which my soldiers, naked and exhausted, were in want, domineered like a despot, and had even disobeyed the express will of our King, D. Ferdinand? Nevertheless," said he, addressing the Central Junta, "you rewarded this scandalous disobedience; and removed me covertly from the command, in order that guilty Spaniards might be honoured with the greater distinction. My opinions were the same then that they are now; but circumstances imperiously required a government, and any government is better than none. Then it was my duty to obey; now I should not perform what is due to my character, if I did not declare what I believe to be required for the salvation of my country. How indeed should I be silent; how should I suffer

the fire of patriotism to be extinguished, seeing the sacrifice of so many victims in our glorious cause; faithful wives murdered with their daughters, after the most foul and unutterable outrages; nuns driven from their cloisters, some wandering about, many more the prey of lustful impiety; ministers of the altar forced from the sanctuary; temples turned into stables and dens of uncleanness; towns reduced to servitude; opulence to squalid beggary; armies composed of the bravest spirits of the nation, which have disappeared in the hottest struggles of their native land, consumed by hunger, naked, and destitute; seeing, in fine, that such revenues and the liberal donations of Spain and America have not even supplied the first necessities of the soldier? How could I remain a tranquil spectator of such great and mournful objects, and not think them superior to the nearest personal interest, to our self-love, and to our very existence? As a Spaniard," he concluded, "I am ready to suffer a thousand deaths in defence of our liberty; and in my rank I have rendered homage to the descendant of the Pelayos, the Jaymes, and the Garcias. As a general, I will join myself to the last soldier who shall have resolution to revenge his country in the last period of her independence; but as a representative of the nation, I must be excused from occupying that distinguished place, unless a legitimate government be immediately established, which foreign powers will not hesitate to ac-

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knowledge, which will represent our sovereign, and which will save a people who are resolved to die for their God, for their king, and for the happiness of their posterity."

*Reply of  
the Junta.*

It is proof of full political freedom in the Spanish press at this juncture, that this paper should have appeared, being little short of a declaration of hostility against the existing government. But though the high monarchical principles with which Romana began his manifesto displeased the democratic party, and the glaring inconsistency of his proposal weakened the effect which his authority might otherwise have produced, the government felt the necessity of doing something to conciliate the nation; they determined to convoke the Cortes, and announced the resolution in a paper which may be considered as their official apology. In this paper, without directly referring to Romana's charges, they replied to them. "Spaniards,"

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said they, "it has seemed good to Providence that in this terrible crisis you should not be able to advance one step towards independence, without advancing one likewise toward liberty. An imbecile and decrepit despotism prepared the way for French tyranny. Political impostors then thought to deceive you by promising reforms, and announcing, in a constitution framed at their pleasure, the empire of the laws, . . . a barbarous contradiction, worthy of their insolence. But the Spanish people, that people which before any other enjoyed the pre-

rogatives and advantages of civil liberty, and opposed to arbitrary power the barrier which justice has appointed, need borrow from no other nation the maxims of political prudence, and told these impudent legislators, that the artifices of intriguers and the mandates of tyrants are not laws for them. You ran to arms; and fortune rendered homage to you, and bestowed victory in reward for your ardour. The immediate effect was the reunion of the state, which was at that time divided into as many factions as provinces. Our enemies thought they had sown among us the deadly seed of anarchy, and did not remember that Spanish judgement and circumspection are always superior to French intrigue. A supreme authority was established without contradiction and without violence; and the people, after having astonished the world with the spectacle of their sublime exaltation and their victories, filled it with admiration and respect by their moderation and discretion.

“The Central Junta was installed, and its first care was to announce, that if the expulsion of the enemy was the first object of its attention in point of time, the permanent welfare of the state was the principal in importance; for to leave it sunk in the sea of old abuses, would be a crime as enormous as to deliver you into the hands of Buonaparte; therefore, as soon as the whirlwind of war permitted, it resounded in your ears the name of the Cortes, which has ever been the bulwark of civil freedom; a name

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heretofore pronounced with mystery by the learned, with distrust by politicians, and with horror by tyrants; but which henceforth in Spain will be the indestructible basis of the monarchy, the most secure support of the rights of Ferdinand and his family, a right for the people, and an obligation for the government. That moral resistance, which has reduced our enemies to confusion and despair in the midst of their victories, must not receive a less reward. Those battles which are lost, those armies which are destroyed; those soldiers who, dispersed in one action, return to offer themselves for another; that populace which, despoiled of almost all they possessed, returned to their homes to share the wretched remains of their property with the defenders of their country; that struggle of barbarity on the one hand, and of invincible constancy on the other, present a whole as terrible as magnificent, which Europe contemplates with astonishment, and which history will one day record, for the admiration and example of posterity. A people so generous ought only to be governed by laws which bear the great character of public consent and common utility, . . . a character which they can only receive by emanating from the august assembly which has been announced to you."

The Junta now betrayed that undue desire of retaining their power, which, though not their only error, was the only one which proceeded from selfish considerations. "It had

been recommended," they said, "that the existing government should be converted into a regency of three or of five persons, and this opinion was supported by the application of an ancient law to our present situation ; but a political position which is entirely new, occasions political forms and principles absolutely new also. To expel the French, to restore to his liberty and his throne our adored King, and to establish a solid and permanent foundation of good government, are the maxims which gave the impulse to our revolution, are those which support and direct it ; and that government will be the best which shall best promote these wishes of the Spanish nation. Does a regency promise this security ? What inconveniences, what dangers, how many divisions, how many parties, how many ambitious pretensions within and without the kingdom ; how much, and how just, discontent in our Americas, now called to have a share in the present government ! What would become of our Cortes, our liberty, the cheering prospects of future welfare and glory which present themselves ? What would become of the object most valuable and dear to the Spanish nation . . the rights of Ferdinand ? The advocates for this institution ought to shudder at the danger to which they expose them, and to bear in mind that they afford to the tyrant a new opportunity of buying and selling them. Let us bow with reverence to the venerable antiquity of the law ; but let

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us profit by the experience of ages. Let us open our annals and trace the history of our regencies. What shall we find? . . . a picture of desolation, of civil war, of rapine, and of human degradation, in unfortunate Castille."

The weakness of this reasoning proved how the love of power had blinded those from whom it proceeded. The Junta wished to evade the law of the Partidas, because it did not specify a case which it could not possibly have contemplated, though the law itself was perfectly and directly relevant. They assumed it as a certain consequence of a regency, that the colonies would be disgusted; that the Cortes would not be convoked; that the rights of Ferdinand would be disregarded; and that new opportunities of corruption would be afforded to France; and they forgot to ask themselves what reason there could be for apprehending all or any of these dangers, more from a council of regency than from their own body. Romana's manifesto contained nothing more flagrantly illogical than this. Having thus endeavoured to set aside this project by alarming the nation, they admitted that the executive power ought to be lodged in fewer hands, and said, that with that circumspection, which neither exposed the state to the oscillations consequent upon every change of government, nor sensibly altered the unity of the body which it was intrusted with, they had concentrated their own authority; and that from this time those measures which re-

quired dispatch, secrecy, and energy, would be directed by a section formed of six members, holding their office for a time.

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The remainder of the manifesto was in a worthier strain. "Another opinion," they said, "which objected to a regency, objected also to the Cortes as an insufficient representation, if convoked according to the ancient forms; as ill-timed, and perhaps perilous in the existing circumstances; and in fine as useless, because the provincial Juntas, which had been immediately erected by the people, were their true representatives; but as the government had already publicly declared that it would adapt the Cortes, in its numbers, forms, and classes, to the present state of things, any objection drawn from the inadequacy of the ancient forms was malicious, as well as inapplicable. Yes, Spaniards," said they, "you are about to have your Cortes, and the national representation will be as perfect and full as it can and ought to be, in an assembly of such importance and eminent dignity. You are about to have your Cortes; and at what time, gracious God! can the nation adopt this measure better than at present? When war has exhausted all the ordinary means, when the selfishness of some, and the ambition of others, debilitate and paralyse the efforts of government; when they seek to destroy from its foundations the essential principle of the monarchy, which is union; when the hydra of federalism, so happily si-

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lenced the preceding year by the creation of the central power, dares again to raise its heads, and endeavour to precipitate us into anarchy ; when the subtlety of our enemies is watching the moment of our divisions to destroy the state ; this is the time, then, to collect in one point the national dignity and power, where the Spanish people may vote and call forth the extraordinary resources which a powerful nation ever has within it for its salvation. That alone can put them in motion ; that alone can encourage the timidity of some, and restrain the ambition of others ; that alone can suppress importunate vanity, puerile pretensions, and infuriated passions. Spain will, in fine, give to Europe a fresh example of its religion, its circumspection, and its discretion, in the just and moderate use which it is about to make of the liberty in which it is constituted. Thus it is that the supreme Junta, which immediately recognized this national representation as a right, and proclaimed it as a reward, now invokes and implores it as the most necessary and efficacious remedy ; and has therefore resolved that the general Cortes shall be convoked on the first day of January in the next year, in order to enter on their august functions the first of March following. When that happy day has arrived, the Junta will say to the representatives of the nation,

“ Ye are met together, O fathers of your country ! and re-established in all the plenitude

of your rights, after a lapse of three centuries. Called to the exercise of authority by the unanimous voice of the kingdom, the individuals of the supreme Junta have shewn themselves worthy of the confidence reposed in them; by employing all their exertions for the preservation of the state. When the power was placed in our hands, our armies, half formed, were destitute; our treasury was empty, and our resources uncertain and distant. We have maintained in the free provinces unity, order, and justice; and in those occupied by the enemy, we have exerted our endeavours to preserve patriotism and loyalty. We have vindicated the national honour and independence in the most complicated and difficult diplomatic negotiations; and we have made head against adversity, ever trusting that we should overcome it by constancy. We have, without doubt, committed errors, and would willingly, were it possible, redeem them with our blood; but in the confusion of events, among the difficulties which surrounded us, who could be certain of always being in the right? Could we be responsible, because one body of troops wanted valour and another confidence; because one general had less prudence and another less good fortune? Much Spaniards, is to be attributed to your inexperience, much to circumstances, but nothing to our intention; that ever has been to deliver our King, to preserve to him a throne for which the people



CHAP. has made such sacrifices, and to maintain it  
XXV. free, independent, and happy. We have de-  
1809. creed the abolition of arbitrary power from the  
September. time we announced the re-establishment of our  
Cortes. Such is, O Spaniards! the use we  
have made of the unlimited authority confided  
to us; and when your wisdom shall have esta-  
blished the basis and form of government most  
proper for the independence and good of the  
state, we will resign it into the hands you shall  
point out, contented with the glory of having  
given to the Spaniards the dignity of a nation  
legitimately constituted.'''

*Guerillas.*

Had the nation been more alive to such hopes as were thus held out, the pressure of events and the presence of imminent danger would have distracted their thoughts from all speculative subjects. Frustrated as their expectations of immediate deliverance had been, their confidence was not shaken; the national temper led them to think lightly of every disaster, but to exaggerate every trifling success; and the defeats at Arzobispo and Almonacid were less felt or thought of by the body of the people, than the successful exploits of those predatory bands, who, under the name of *Guerillas*, were now in action every where. The government partook of this disposition; and it must be ascribed as much to this as to policy, that the official as well as the provincial journals published every adventure of this kind more fully and circumstantially than some of those actions wherein

their armies had disappeared. The example which Mina and the Empecinado had set was followed with alacrity and tempting success, rich opportunities being offered by the requisition of plate from churches and from individuals, which the intrusive government was at this time enforcing. The guerillas were on the watch, and intercepted no trifling share of the spoils. One party surprised a convoy with eighty *quin-tals* of silver near Segovia. The French, who found themselves sorely annoyed by this species of warfare, though they were as yet far from apprehending all they should suffer by it, endeavoured to raise a counter-force of the same kind in Navarre, under the name of Miquelets. But that appellation, which was so popular among the Spaniards, had no attraction for them when it was pressed into the usurper's service, and the scheme only evinced the incapacity of those who projected it, for the guerillas depended for information, shelter, every thing which could contribute either to their success or their safety, upon the good will of their countrymen; who then would engage in an opposite service, with the certainty that every Spaniard would regard him as an enemy and traitor, and as such endeavour secretly or openly to bring about his destruction?

Among the persons who became most eminent for their exploits in this desultory warfare, D. Julian Sanchez began at this time to be distinguished. He raised a company of lancers in

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September.D. Julian  
Sanchez.

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the district of Ciudad Rodrigo, and acted with such effect against the enemy in the plains of Castille, that General Marchand, who commanded the sixth corps at Salamanca, threatened to execute the vengeance which the guerrillas at once eluded and defied, upon those whom he suspected of favouring them. Specifying, therefore, eight of the principal sheep-owners in that part of the country, he declared that they should be kept under a military guard in their own houses, and the severest measures be enforced against their persons and property, if the bands of robbers, as he called them, did not totally disappear within eight days after the date of his proclamation. He declared also that the priests, *alcaldes*, lawyers, and surgeons of every village, should be responsible with their lives for any disorders committed by the guerrillas within their respective parishes; adding, that every village and every house which the inhabitants might abandon on the approach of the French should be burnt. This served only to call forth an indignant reply from Sanchez, containing some of those incontrovertible truths which made the better part of the French themselves detest the service in which they were employed.

Ney's corps was at this time in Salamanca, under General Marchand, occupying also Ledesma and Alba de Tormes. Soult's headquarters were at Plasencia; he occupied Coria, Galesteo, and the banks of the Tietar and the

Tagus, as far as the Puente del Arzobispo; Mortier's corps was at Talavera, Oropesa, La Calzada de Oropesa, and Naval Moral; Victor's advanced posts were at Daymiel, his head-quarters at Toledo; Sebastiani was at Fuenlebrada, and his corps extended from Aranjuez to Alcala. On the side of La Mancha or Extremadura, they could not hope to open a way to Seville, unless the government by an act of suicidal madness should encounter the certain consequences of a general action. Remaining, therefore, on the defensive here, they prepared for offensive operations on the side of Salamanca, with a view to the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, and a third invasion of Portugal. Sir Robert Wilson's representations respecting the importance of that point had not been neglected by the government; the force which the Duque del Parque commanded there was now respectable in numbers, and had acquired some experience as well as confidence in that desultory warfare which Sir Robert had begun, and which D. Julian Sanchez had so well continued. Preparatory to their movements on this quarter, the French attempted to carry Astorga by a sudden attack, for which purpose, with a force of 2600 men, they advanced from the Ezla, and endeavoured to force the Bishop's Gate. D. Jose Maria de Santocildes, who commanded there, was neither wanting in principle nor in conduct. His measures for defence were well taken and well executed, and after a four hours'

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October.*The French  
repulsed  
from  
Astorga.*

Oct. 9.

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October.

*Battle of  
Tamames.*

Oct. 18.

action, the enemy retreated with the loss of more than 200 men.

A movement of more importance was presently undertaken against the Duque del Parque, who had taken a strong position on the heights near Tamames. Marchand commanded the French corps, consisting of 10,000 foot, 1200 horse, with fourteen pieces of cannon; and nothing but his contempt of the enemy could have induced him to attack them in such a post. He came on in full confidence, forming his columns with ostentatious display, as if to exhibit the perfect facility with which their evolutions were made. As it was soon apparent that the main attack would be upon the left, being the weakest part of the position, the Duke ordered Count de Belveder, with half the reserve, to support this point. Carrera, who commanded the left wing, stood the attack well; a small party of cavalry, still further to the left, were posted in a wood, from whence it was intended that they should issue, and charge the flank of the enemy; but Carrera's second brigade making a movement for the purpose of allowing their artillery to play, the French horse charged them at full speed before they were well formed, broke in upon them, and cut down the Spaniards at their guns: . . for a moment the day seemed lost. The Duke, with his staff, came up in time to the place of danger. Mendizabal, who was second in command, sprang from his horse, and rallied those who were falling back; the young

Principe de Anglona distinguished himself in the same manner; and Carrera, whose horse had received two musket-balls, and one wound with a sabre, put himself at the head of his men, charged the French with the bayonet, routed them and recovered the guns. Meantime an attack was made upon the right and centre; but here the Spaniards were more strongly posted, and D. Francisco de Losada, who commanded in that part, repulsed them. They retreated in great disorder, leaving more than 1100 on the field; their wounded were not less than 2000.

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On the third day after the battle, the Duke moved forward, hoping to surprise the enemy in Salamanca. He crossed at Ledesma on the 23d, and marched all the night of the 24th; at daybreak he reached the heights which command Salamanca to the northward, but the French had retreated during the night to Toro, carrying with them the church plate and all their other plunder. They had remained five days in hope of receiving a reinforcement from Kellermann, who, with a weak corps, occupied the country between Segovia and Burgos; but seeing no succour approach, the loss which they had sustained rendered it necessary for them to retire with all speed, upon the unexpected intelligence that the Spaniards were within three leagues of the city.

*The French  
retire from  
Salamanca.  
Oct. 21.*

The people of Salamanca did not long enjoy their deliverance. While Kellermann was re-

*Marshal  
Soult ap-  
pointed Ma-  
jor-general.*

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*The Junta  
resolve on  
risking a  
general ac-  
tion.*

inforced with one brigade, another from Des-  
soles' division was directed toward that city,  
preparatory to more important movements;  
activity having now been given to the French  
armies, and union, which had long been wanted,  
by the appointment of Marshal Soult to the  
rank of Major-General in place of Marshal  
Jourdan, who was recalled to Paris. This change  
was highly acceptable to the troops in general,  
though there prevailed a feeling of personal ill-  
will toward Soult on the part of some of his fel-  
low marshals which had not existed toward his  
predecessor; but more confidence was reposed  
in him, the reputation which Jourdan had ob-  
tained in the days of the National Convention  
not having been supported by his subsequent  
fortune. The Duque del Parque, perceiving  
that more serious operations were likely to be  
directed against him, urged the government to  
act on the offensive in La Mancha, as a means  
of averting the danger from himself; and the  
Junta needed little encouragement at this time  
for measures of the most desperate temerity.  
The ablest members of that body partook so  
strongly of the national temper, that they were  
wholly incapacitated for understanding the real  
state either of their own armies, or of the allies,  
or of their enemies. Their infatuation might  
seem incredible, if it were not proved both by  
their conduct and by documents which they  
themselves laid before the nation, stating upon  
what grounds they had acted. They had per-

suaded themselves that if Sir Arthur, after Cuesta rejoined him, had given battle to Soult, according to his original intention, the destruction of Soult's army would have been easy and certain, the annihilation of Victor's army easy as a consequent measure, the recovery of Madrid easy, and the expulsion of the French as far as the Ebro, or even to the Pyrenees. By some fatality, they said, the British General had chosen that line of conduct which was precisely the most prejudicial to the Spanish cause. By some stranger fatality they themselves persisted in believing that the British army had been at all times amply supplied with means of subsistence and of transport, that it was at any time capable of advancing, and (as if themselves incapable of understanding that the British Commander and the British Ambassador meant what they said in their repeated representations) that it would advance if the Spaniards evinced the determination and the ability to act without them. And with this persuasion they deluded their General as well as themselves.

Rash as he was, even Cuesta would hardly have been so deluded. Upon his resignation Eguia had only held the command while the government could look about for a successor. Castaños was under a cloud; the inquiry which he demanded had never been granted, and though public opinion was beginning to regard him as his past services and real worth deserved, there was no thought of again employing him.

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October.*Exposicion  
de la Junta  
Central.  
Ramo Di-  
plomatico,  
p. 27.**Areisaga  
appointed  
to the com-  
mand.*



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October.

*State of  
Madrid.*

Alburquerque was an object of jealousy ; Romana of dislike and fear. Areizaga therefore, who had been highly commended by Blake for his conduct in the battle of Alcañiz, was removed from the command at Lerida to be placed at the head of 50,000 men. Alburquerque, who had from 9000 to 10,000 in Extremadura, was ordered to join Parque, and place himself under his orders ; while Areizaga, with the greatest force that they could collect, was instructed to advance upon Madrid. What they knew concerning the state of that city might well excite their feelings, and raise in them a strong desire of delivering its inhabitants from their bondage ; but there was nothing to encourage the extravagant hopes which they entertained. The national feeling existed nowhere in greater strength, though there was no other place wherein so many traitors were collected ; all who in other parts of the country had made themselves conspicuous as partizans of Joseph, having fled thither when they could not abide in safety elsewhere. . To leave the capital was an enterprise of the utmost danger for those who were willing to sacrifice every thing, and take their chance in the field against the invaders : any one might enter ; but in the course of a few hours it was known who the stranger was, whence he came, where he was harboured, what was his business, and who were his connexions, . . every thing which the most vigilant police, and the most active system of espionage

could discover. The tradesmen and those whose means of subsistence were not destroyed by the revolution were oppressed by heavy and frequent exactions; the Intruder's ministers knew the impolicy of this, but nevertheless were compelled to impose these burdens; and after the atrocities which they had sanctioned, they could suffer nothing more either in character or in peace of mind. Otherwise, even in Madrid, where a strong military force kept every thing in order, and where none of the immediate evils of war were felt, there were sights which might have wrung the heart. Men and women, who had been born and bred in opulence, begged in the streets, as soon as evening had closed, . . the feelings of better times preventing them from exposing their misery in the day-light. But what most wounded the Spanish temper was the condition of their clergy, and monks, and friars, who, suffering as it were as confessors under the intrusive government, worked as daily labourers for their support, employing in hard and coarse labour hands which, the Spaniards said, were consecrated by the use of holy oil, and by contact with the Body of our Lord!

Overlooking all impediments in the way of their desires, the Junta calculated so surely upon delivering the capital, that they fixed upon a captain-general, a governor, and a corregidor, who were to enter upon their functions as soon as it should be recovered; and they charged Jovellanos and Riquelme to draw up provisional

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Jovellanos,  
§ 103.

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*November.*

regulations for securing tranquillity there when the enemy should withdraw. This confidence arose from a national character which repeated disasters could neither subdue nor correct. The rashness with which they determined to bring on a general action, at whatever risk, appeared to them a prudent resolution. Now that the continental war was terminated, and Buonaparte had no other employment for his armies, it was certain that more troops than had been withdrawn from Spain would be marched into it, for the purpose of effecting its subjugation; they thought it therefore the best and surest policy to make a great effort before the numbers of the enemy should be thus formidably increased. Former failures had neither disheartened nor instructed them; and they furthered the equipment of the army with a zeal which, if it had been excited two months before in providing for their allies, might have realized the hopes wherein they now indulged.

*Condition  
of the Bri-  
tish army.*

The new commander partook the blind confidence of his government. In some degree he appears to have been deceived by them; for he was neither informed of Lord Wellington's determination not to advance, nor of the condition of the British army, which was such at that time as to render an advance impossible. From causes which physiologists have not yet been able to ascertain, the country where they were quartered, upon the Guadiana, is peculiarly unhealthy during the dry season, when that river

ceases to be a stream, and, like its feeders, is reduced to a succession of detached pools in the deeper parts of its course. The troops suffered so much more than the natives, partly because the disease laid stronger hold on constitutions which were not accustomed to it, and partly from the peculiar liableness of men, when congregated in camps, to receive and communicate endemic maladies, that more than a third of their whole number were on the sick list; and the inhabitants of the country, aware as they were that this plague belonged to it, ascribed its greater prevalence and malignity among the strangers to their having eaten mushrooms, holding the whole tribe themselves in abhorrence, and not thinking the ordinary causes of the disease could account for the effects which they witnessed. Areizaga was ignorant of all this, and the government allowed him to advance with an expectation that the British army was to follow and support him.

Knowing the condition of that army, it seems almost incredible that the Junta could have deceived themselves when they thus deceived their general. But unlikely as it was that they should have given orders for a forward movement of such importance, without such co-operation, they hoped perhaps to deceive the enemy, by reports that Lord Wellington and Alburquerque would advance along the valley of the Tagus. The French were never able to obtain good intelligence of the English plans; they could,

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*Disposition  
of the  
French  
troops.*

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*November.*

however, to a certain point, foresee them, as a skilful chess-player apprehends the scheme of an opponent who is not less expert than himself at the game; they had learnt to respect the British army in the field, but they thought the British Commander was more likely from caution to let pass an opportunity of success, than to afford the enemy one by rashness. This opinion they had formed from the events of the late campaign, being fully aware of the danger to which they had been exposed, and unacquainted with the difficulties which had frustrated Sir Arthur's plans, . . difficulties indeed which they who were accustomed always to take whatever was needful for their armies either from friend or foe, without any other consideration than that of supplying their own immediate wants, would have regarded with astonishment, if not contempt. When Marshal Soult therefore prepared at this time to act against the Spaniards, the English force hardly entered into his calculations. He had 70,000 men available for immediate service in one direction. One corps of these, under Laborde, watched the Tagus, with an eye to Alburquerque's movements. Victor observed the roads from Andalusia to Toledo and Aranjuez, having his cavalry in advance at Madrilejos and Consuegra; Sebastiani, with the fourth corps, was in the rear of Victor, securing the capital, from which neighbourhood a division had been sent to support Marchand after his defeat at Ta-

mames. The reserve, under Mortier, was at Talavera; Gazan occupied Toledo with two weak regiments; and Joseph was with his guards at Aranjuez, relying upon the fortune of Napoleon, and now, when the Continent was effectually subdued, and reinforcements had already begun to enter the Peninsula, believing himself in secure possession of the crown of Spain.

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On the 3d of November, Areizaga's army, consisting of 43,000 foot, 6600 cavalry, and sixty pieces of cannon, began their march from the foot of the Sierra Morena into the plains, taking with them eight days' provision. The advanced guard, of 2000 cavalry under Freire, were one day's march in front; the infantry followed in seven divisions, then the rest of the cavalry in reserve, and the head-quarters last, marching from twenty to thirty miles a day; they had no tents, and took up their quarters at night in the towns upon the road. They advanced forces by Daymiel on the left, others along the high road to Madrid, by Valdepeñas and Manzanares. The French retired before them, and in several skirmishes of cavalry the Spaniards were successful. Latour Maubourg escaped with a considerable body of horse from Madrilejos by the treachery of a deserter, who apprised him of his danger just in time for him to get out of the town as the Spaniards entered it. They continued their way through Tembleque to Dos Barrios; then, by a flank march,

*Areizaga  
advances  
from the  
Sierra Mo-  
rena.*

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*The Aus-  
trian com-  
missioner  
remon-  
strates  
against his  
purpose.  
Nov. 16.*

reached S. Cruz de la Zarza ; threw bridges across the Tagus, and passed a division over. Here they took a position ; the French pushed their patrols of cavalry near the town, and Areizaga drew out his army in order of battle. An action upon that ground did not suit the enemy, and the Spanish general was frantic enough to determine upon leaving the mountains, and giving them battle in the plain.

Baron Crossand, who was employed in Spain on a mission from Austria, was with the army, and, dreading the unavoidable consequences of such a determination, presented a memorial to Areizaga, reminding him, that only the preceding day he had admitted how dangerous it would be thus to hazard the welfare of his country. None of the motives, he said, which should induce a prudent general to risk a battle were applicable in the present case ; he had nothing to urge him forward, and the most fertile provinces of Spain were in his rear : by meeting the enemy upon their own ground, the advantage of position was voluntarily given them, and the superiority of numbers which the Spaniards possessed was not to be considered as an advantage, in their state of discipline ; so far indeed was it otherwise that the French founded part of their hopes upon the disorder into which the Spaniards would fall in consequence of their own multitude. A victory might procure the evacuation of Madrid and of the two Castilles, but these results were light in the balance when

weighed against the consequences of defeat. The wisest plan of operations was to entrench himself upon the strong ground which the left bank of the Tagus afforded; from thence he might send out detachments toward Madrid and in all directions, and act in concert with the Dukes of Parque and Alburquerque, patience and caution rendering certain their ultimate success.

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These representations were lost upon Areizaga; he marched back to Dos Barrios, and then advanced upon Ocaña into the open country. About 800 French and Polish cavalry were in the town; they were driven out by the Spanish horse; a skirmish ensued, in which four or five hundred men fell on both sides. In this affair the French general Paris was borne out of the saddle by a lancer, and laid dead on the field. He was an old officer, whom the Spaniards represent as a humane and honourable man, regretting that he should have perished in such a cause. Areizaga bivouacued that night; and the French, who had now collected the corps of Sebastiani and Mortier, under command of the latter, crossed the Tagus before morning. At daybreak Areizaga ascended the church tower of Ocaña, and seeing the array and number of the enemy, it is said that he perceived, when too late, what would be the result of his blind temerity. He arrayed his army in two equal parts, one on each side the town; and his second line was placed so near

*Battle of  
Ocaña.*



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the first, that, if the first were thrown into disorder, there was not room for it to rally. Most of the cavalry were stationed in four lines upon the right flank, a disposition neither imposing in appearance nor strong in reality. The artillery was upon the two flanks.

About seven in the morning, Zayas, who had often distinguished himself, attacked the French cavalry with the advanced guard, and drove them back. Between eight and nine the cannonade began. The Spanish artillery was well served ; it dismounted two of the French guns, and blew up some of their ammunition-carts. Mortier having reconnoitred the ground, determined to make his chief attack upon the right, and, after having cannonaded it for a while from a battery in his centre, he ordered Leval, with the Polish and German troops, to advance, and turn a ravine which extended from the town nearly to the end of this wing of the Spanish army. Leval formed his line in compact columns ; the Spaniards met them along the whole of their right wing, and their first line wavered. It was speedily reinforced ; the right wing was broken, and a charge of cavalry completed the confusion on this side. The left stood firm, and cheered Areizaga as he passed ; an able general might yet have secured a retreat, but he was confounded, and quitted the field, ordering this part of the army to follow him. Lord Macduff, who was with the Spaniards, then requested the second in command to assume the direction ;

but while he was exerting himself to the utmost, the French cavalry broke through the centre, and the rout was complete. The Spaniards were upon an immense plain, every where open to the cavalry, by whom they were followed and cut down on all sides. Victor, who crossed the Tagus at Villa Mensiger, pursued all night. All their baggage was taken, almost all their artillery; according to the French account, 4000 were killed, and 26,000 made prisoners: on no occasion have the French had so little temptation to exaggerate. Their own loss was about 1700.

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This miserable defeat was the more mournful, because the troops that day gave proof enough both of capacity and courage to show how surely, under good discipline and good command, they might have retrieved the military character of their country. No artillery could have been better served. The first battalion of guards, which was 900 strong, left upon the field fourteen officers, and half its men. Four hundred and fifty of a Seville regiment, which had distinguished itself with Wilson at Puerto de Baños, entered the action, and only eighty of them were accounted for when the day was over. Miserably commanded as the Spaniards were, there was a moment when the French, in attempting to deploy, were thrown into disorder, by their well-supported fire, and success was at that moment doubtful. The error of exposing the army in such a situa-

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tion must not be ascribed wholly to incapacity in Areizaga, who had distinguished himself not less for conduct than courage at Alcañiz; it was another manifestation of the national character, of that obstinacy which no experience could correct, of that spirit which no disasters could subdue.

*Treatment  
of the pri-  
soners.*

There was none of that butchery in the pursuit by which the French had disgraced themselves at Medellin. The intrusive government had at that time acted with the cruelty which fear inspires; feeling itself secure now, its object was to take prisoners, and force them into its own service; and for this purpose a different sort of cruelty was employed. While the Madrid Gazette proclaimed that the French soldiers behaved with more than humanity to the captured Spaniards, that they might gratify their Emperor's brother by treating his misled subjects with this kindness, the treatment which those prisoners received was in reality so brutal, that if the people of Madrid had had no other provocation, it would have sufficed for making them hate and execrate the Intruder, and those by whom his councils were directed. They were plundered without shame or mercy by the French troops, and any who were recognized as having been taken before, or as having belonged to Joseph's levies, were hurried before a military tribunal, and shot in presence of their fellows. Even an attempt to escape was punished with death by these tribunals, whose

sentence was without appeal! They were imprisoned in the Retiro, and in the buildings attached to the Museum, where they were ill fed and worse used; and they who had friends, relations, or even parents, in Madrid, were neither allowed to communicate with, nor to receive the slightest assistance from them. By such usage about 8000 were forced into a service, from which they took the first opportunity to desert, most of them in the course of a few months having joined the guerillas.

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Rigel, 2.  
406.

The defeat of Areizaga drew after it that of the Duke del Parque. Too confident in his troops, he remained in his advanced situation, amid the open country of Castille, till the army which he had defeated was reinforced by Kellermann's division from Valladolid. The Duke knew there were 8000 French infantry and 2000 horse in Medina del Campo, and, thinking that this was all their force, took a position at Carpio, upon the only rising ground in those extensive plains, and there waited for their attack. The enemy advanced slowly, as if waiting for other troops to come up. Seeing this, the Duke gave orders to march against them, and the French retreated, fighting as they fell back, from about three in the afternoon till the close of day, when they entered Medina del Campo. The Duke then discovered that a far greater force than he had expected was at hand, and fell back to his position at Carpio, there to give his troops rest, for they had been

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*Battle of  
Alba de  
Tormes.*

thirty hours without any. At midnight the French also retired upon their reinforcements. During the following day the Duke obtained full intelligence; it now became too evident that he could no longer continue in his advanced situation, and he began his retreat from Carpio in the night. In the evening of the next day he halted a few hours at Vittoria and Cordovilla, and at ten that night continued his march, being pursued by Kellermann, who did not yet come near enough to annoy him. On the morning of the 28th he reached Alba de Tormes, and there drew up his troops to resist the enemy, who were now close upon him. He posted them upon the heights which command the town on both sides of the Tormes, in order to cover his rear guard, the bridges, and the fords; the whole cavalry was on the left bank. General Lorcet began the attack, and was repulsed by the infantry and artillery: two brigades of French horse then charged the right wing of the Spaniards; their cavalry were ordered to meet the charge; whether from some accidental disorder, or sudden panic, they took to flight without discharging a shot, or exchanging a single sword stroke; part of them were rallied and brought back, but the same disgraceful feeling recurred; they fled a second time, and left the right flank of the army uncovered: the French then charged the exposed wing with an overpowering force, and, in spite of a brave resistance, succeeded in breaking

through. The victorious cavalry then charged the left of the Spaniards; but here it was three times repulsed. Mendizabal and Carrera formed their troops into an oblong square, and every farther attempt of the enemy was baffled: night now came on; this body, taking advantage of the darkness, retreated along the heights on the left bank of the town, and the Duke then gave orders to fall back in the direction of Tamames. They marched in good order till morning, when, as they were within eight miles of that town, and of the scene of their former victory, a small party of the enemy's horse came in sight, and a rumour ran through the ranks that the French were about to charge them in great force. The very men who had fought so nobly only twelve hours before now threw away firelocks, knapsacks, and whatever else encumbered them: the enemy were not near enough to avail themselves of this panic; and the Duke, with the better part of his troops, reached the Peña de Francia, and in that secure position halted to collect again the fugitives and stragglers. Kellermann spoke of 3000 men killed and 2000 prisoners: and all the artillery of the right wing was taken.

By this victory the French were enabled without farther obstacle to direct their views against Ciudad Rodrigo, and to threaten Portugal: and Lord Wellington removed in consequence from his position in the vicinity of Badajos to the north of the Tagus, there to

CHAP.  
XXV.

1809.  
November.

**CHAP.** take measures against the operations which he  
**XXV.** had long foreseen. Alburquerque's little army  

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**1809.** was now the only one which remained un-  
**November.** broken; but what was this against the nume-  
rous armies of the French? even if it were suf-  
ficient to cover Extremadura, what was there  
on the side of La Mancha to secure Andalusia,  
and Seville itself? Every effort was made to  
collect a new army under Areizaga at the passes  
of the Sierra, and to reinforce the Duke del  
Parque also; . . but the danger was close at  
hand.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

## SIEGE OF GERONA.

WHILE the Central Junta directed its whole 1809.  
attention toward Madrid, and expended all its  
efforts in operations, so ill concerted and ill di-  
rected, that the disastrous termination was fore-  
seen with equal certainty both by their friends  
and foes, Catalonia was left to defend itself; and  
a sacrifice of heroic duty, not less memorable  
than that which Zaragoza had exhibited, was  
displayed at Gerona.

Gerona (the Gerunda of the Romans, a place *Gerona.*  
of such unknown antiquity that fabulous his-  
torians have ascribed its foundation to Geryon)  
is situated upon the side and at the foot of a hill,  
where the little river Onar, which divides the  
city from the suburbs, falls into the Ter. Two  
centuries ago it was second only to Barcelona  
in size and importance; other places in the  
principality, more favourably situated for com-  
merce, and less overlaid with monks and friars,  
had now outgrown it, for of about 14,000 in-  
habitants, not less than a fourth were clergy and  
religioners. In the thirteenth century it was  
distinguished by the defence\* which Ramon

\* *Non est memoria . . . quod in Barcinonensium, Marca Hispa-*  
*castro vel civitate aliquâ tales fue-* *nica, 568.*  
*rint defensores. Gesta Comitum*



Folch of Cardona made there against Philip III. of France ; a memorable siege, not only for the resolution with which Ramon held out, and for the ability with which he obtained honourable terms at last, concealing from Philip the extremity of famine to which the place was reduced, but also for the singular destruction which was brought upon the besiegers by a plague of flies\*. Their

\* This would naturally be deemed miraculous, and the miracle was ascribed to St. Narcissus and other saints, whose graves the French had disturbed, and scattered their remains about. One statement is, that the flies proceeded from St. Narcissus's tomb. *Muscæ istæ partim erant lividæ, partim virides, in quâdam sui parte colorem rubeum denotantes.* (Gesta Com. Barcin. 569, ut supra.) *Ceterum, qui locorum perili sunt quæ circum Gerundam visuntur,* says the Archbishop Pierre de Marca, *ii testantur haud procul eâ urbe videri rupes ex quibus vulgò oriuntur etiamnum muscæ quales e sepulchro Sancti Narcissi prodiisse fabulantur. Quod si ita est, non ultra inquirendum est in earum originem quæ Gallico tum exercitui insultârunt, quas manifestum est ortas esse ex rupibus illis.* Marca Hispanica, 468.

The flies are described differently in the *Acta Sanctorum* (Mart. t. ii. 624), where the miracles of St. Narcissus are given *ex hispanico Ant. Vincentii Domenecci.* *Ex ipso sancti præsulis sepulchro exierunt innumera examina muscarum, cæruleo partim, partim viridi colore tinctarum, rubrisque striis dispunctarum; quæ virorum equorumque subingressæ nares, non prius deserebant occupatos, quàm spiritum vitamque*

*abstulissent, concidentibus humi mortuis. Tanti enim erat veneni efficacia, ut seu virum seu equum momordissent, morsum continuò mors sequeretur.* These authorities are given because they relate to a curious fact in natural history, . . if there be any truth in the story ; and that there was a plague of insects can hardly be doubted. That their bite was so deadly, and that they proceeded from the tomb, I should have hesitated as little as the reader to disbelieve, if some other accounts had not seemed to show that both these apparent improbabilities may be possible. It is said that one part of Louisiana is infested by a fly whose bite is fatal to horses. And about twenty years ago, at Lewes, when a leaden coffin, which had been interred about threescore years, was opened, the legs and thigh-bones of the skeleton were found to be "covered with myriads of flies, of a species, perhaps, totally unknown to the naturalist. The wings were white, and the spectators gave it the name of the coffin-fly. The lead was perfectly sound, and presented not the least chink or crevice for the admission of air" : and the flies which were thus released are described as being active and strong on the wing.

If, however, some long lost

bite is said to have been fatal to the horses, of which such numbers died, that their carcasses produced pestilence ; two-thirds of the army perished, and the remainder found it necessary to retreat into their own country, carrying home in their coffins the chiefs who had led them into Spain. In the succession-war, Gerona was signalized by the desperate resistance which it made against Philip V. After it had fallen, the Catalans blockaded it during eight months ; M. Berwick raised the blockade, and the French minister proposed to him to demolish the works ; his plea was, that the expense of keeping a garrison there might be spared ; but his intent, that the Spaniards might have one strong-hold the less upon their frontier. But Berwick required an order from Louis XIV. to warrant him in a proceeding which must necessarily offend the King of Spain ; and Louis was then withheld by a sense of decency from directly ordering what he wished to have had done. The fortifications after that time had been so neglected, that when Arthur Young was there in 1787, he thought they were not strong enough to stop an army for half an hour : the old walls, however, had now been well repaired ; and the city was also protected by four forts upon the high ground above it. But its principal defence was the

CHAP.  
XXVI.

1800.

species. had reappeared from the tomb, and multiplied so as to become a plague, it would have continued in the country. But if Pierre de Marca was rightly informed that a fly which corre-

sponds in appearance to the description is still found there, it certainly possesses none of the tremendous powers which the legend ascribes to it.

CHAP.  
XXVI.

1809.

citadel, called here, as at Barcelona, Monjuic, which commanded it from an eminence about sixty fathoms distant. This was a square fort, 240 yards in length on each side, with four bastions, and for outworks the four towers of Saints Luis, Narcis, Daniel, and Juan.

*Forces of the  
garrison.*

*Vol. i. p.  
465; Vol.  
ii. p. 322.*

The garrison amounted only to 3400 men, but they were commanded by Mariano Alvares, and the inhabitants were encouraged by having twice driven the enemy from their walls. After the battle of Valls it was certain that the French, having no force to oppose them in the field, would make a third attempt to obtain possession of this important place, and that they would make it in sufficient strength and with ample means, lest they should incur the disgrace of a third repulse. No means, therefore, were neglected of providing for defence; but while every military preparation which the circumstances permitted was made, Alvarez felt and understood that his surest reliance must be placed upon that moral resistance of which the Zaragozans had set them so illustrious an example. Like the crusaders of old, the inhabitants took the cross, and formed eight companies of an hundred men each; the women also, maids and matrons alike, enrolled themselves in an association which they called the Company of St. Barbara, to perform whatever duties lay within their power, as their countrywomen had done at Zaragoza. The French scoffed at these things, as indicating the fanaticism of a people whom they considered

*Crusaders  
enrolled.*

*Company of  
St. Bar-  
bara.*

greatly inferior to themselves. Light-minded, as well as light-hearted, and regardless of any higher motive than may be found in the sense of mere military duty (for it was the direct object of Buonaparte's institutions to eradicate or preclude every better principle), they were incapable of perceiving that the state of mind which their nefarious conduct had called forth, sanctified such measures.

CHAP.  
XXVI.

1809.

These were demonstrations of the religious feeling with which the Geronans devoted themselves to the cause of their country, and to the duty of self-defence. With more reason might the French deride the part which in that city was assigned to the Patron Saint, though such derision would come with little consistency from those among them who professed to believe in the Romish church. St. Narcis, as the Saint is called in the clipt language of that province, had obtained as much credit for defeating Duhesme in his first attempt upon Gerona, as for sending the plague of flies against the French King Philip. A meeting had in consequence been held of the municipality, the chapter, the heads of the religious houses, and all the chief persons of the city, Colonel Julien Bolivar presiding as the king's lieutenant. Resolutions were passed, that seeing St. Narcis had always vouchsafed his especial protection to the principality of Catalonia, as had been manifested during the former invasions of the French, and recently by the defeat of Duhesme, which was wholly owing

*St. Narcis  
appointed  
generalis-  
simo.*

CHAP.  
XXVI.

1809.

to his favour ; and seeing moreover that for the purpose of resisting the tyranny and oppression of Napoleon Buonaparte it was necessary to appoint a commander who should be capable of directing their operations and repulsing such an enemy, . . no one could so worthily fill that office as the invincible patron and martyr St. Narcis ; and therefore, in the name of Ferdinand the King, they nominated him Generalissimo of all the Spanish forces by land and sea, and confided to him the defence of Gerona, of its district, and of the whole principality. On the following Sunday, the Junta, with all the clergy and other persons of distinction, went in procession to notify this appointment to the Saint in his shrine in the church of St. Felix ; the shrine was opened, and a general's staff, a sword, and a belt, all richly ornamented, were deposited by the relics of the chosen commander ; and the enthusiastic joy which the ceremony excited was such, that the Spaniards said it seemed as if the glory of the Lord had descended and filled the church, manifesting that their devotion was approved and blessed by Heaven !

*All mention  
of capitulat-  
ing forbid-  
den.*

This display of national character and of Romish superstition had taken place in the first fervour of their feelings after a signal deliverance. The spirit of the Geronans did not fail when danger was again at hand ; and the governor, seeing and relying upon this disposition of the people, thought it advisable, before the time of trial approached, to restrain by fear the

few treacherous subjects who might be waiting, when opportunity offered, to declare themselves ; he published an edict, therefore, forbidding all persons from speaking of capitulation on pain of immediate death, without exception of class, rank, or condition. Both by the garrison and the people it was received with acclamations. The military Junta of the city proposed that the streets should be unpaved as a precaution against bombardment ; this was opposed by the board of police, upon the ground that it would be prejudicial to health ; the question, therefore, was referred to the medical board, who found it convenient to avoid a physical discussion, and compromised the matter by deciding that the paving should be taken up in the squares and streets through which the troops must necessarily pass.

General Reille, who was to have commanded the besieging army, was at this time superseded by General Verdier. This army consisted of 18,000 men ; to make up that number Marshal St. Cyr was compelled to weaken the corps of observation under his own command, which was thus reduced to about 12,000 ; but from such armies as the Catalans could bring into the field, and such counsels as directed them, he well knew how little there was to apprehend. In this confidence St. Cyr would have preferred blockading the city to besieging it, and would have waited till it should be reduced by famine, whereby all the loss which the besiegers sus-

CHAP.  
XXVI.

1809.

April 1.

*St. Cyr  
would have  
reduced the  
city by  
blockade.**St. Cyr,  
164.*

CHAP.  
XXVI.1809.  
May.*The bom-  
bardment  
begins.*

tained might have been spared. But he was neither consulted nor listened to, holding the command at this time only till Marshal Auge-reau should arrive. On the 6th of May the besiegers first appeared on the heights of Casa Roca and Costarroja on the other side the Ter, and began to form their lines without opposition. A battery of eleven mortars was planted upon Casa Roca, from whence it commanded the city ; works were erected against Monjuic also ; the garrison being far too weak to impede these operations, and no efforts being made for impeding them from without. When the lines were completed, and every thing ready to commence the bombardment, they sent a flag of truce requiring Alvarez to spare himself and the city the evils which must inevitably attend resistance. D. Mariano admitted the officer to his presence, and bade him tell his general, that in future the trouble of sending flags of truce might be spared, for he would hold no other communication with him than at the mouth of the cannon. The French commander found means of conveying a letter to him afterwards, with the significant observation that he might probably repent having thus cut himself off from the only means of communication which were allowed in war. It was on the 12th of June that the summons was sent, and on the night of the 13th, about an hour after midnight, the bombardment began. Then for the first time the *generale* or alarm was beat, a sound

which afterwards became so frequent in this devoted city : roused from their sleep, the aged and the children repaired to cellars and other places of imagined security, which they who could had provided for this emergency, and the female company of St. Barbara hastened to their posts. An ill-judged sally was made early on the 17th against some works which were supposed to be the base of a battery against the Puerto de Francia : it was successful, but the success was of little importance and dearly purchased ; many brave men fell, and 110 were brought back wounded. The bombardment continued, and among other buildings the military hospital was destroyed : the people, while it was in flames, observed that its destruction was deserved, for, instead of proving a place of help and healing for the sick, covetousness and speculation had made their profit there upon human misery. The hospitals of St. Domingo and St. Martin were also rendered uninhabitable ; one other had been made ready, another was to be prepared, and the difficulty of providing for the sick and wounded increased at the time when their numbers were daily increasing. About the end of the month an epidemic affection of the bowels become prevalent, occasioned partly by the perpetual agitation of mind which the people endured, partly by sleeping in damp subterranean places, where the air never circulated freely, and where many had nothing but the ground to lie on. In July,

CHAP.  
XXVI.1809.  
*June.*



CHAP.  
XXVI.1809.  
June,*St. Cyr  
draws  
nearer Ge-  
rona.**P. 362.*

a bilious fever is usually endemic in Gerona; it seized especially upon the lower classes now, and upon the refugees from those places which had been taken or burned by the enemy; and it affected the wounded also.

During these operations St. Cyr, retaining the command till Augereau, who was disabled by an attack of gout at Perpignan, should arrive to supersede him, had remained in his position near Vich. The capture of the French troops near Monzon, and Blake's success at Alcañiz, had so alarmed the enemy at Zaragoza and at Madrid, that orders were dispatched for him to return towards Tarragona, and combine his movements with Suchet, who, it was deemed, would otherwise be in danger. But King Joseph's orders were respected almost as little by the French commanders as by the Spanish nation. Marshal St. Cyr represented that his army had always been left to itself, having no relation with any other corps, and being specially destined for subjugating Catalonia, which the Emperor Napoleon had thought quite sufficient employment for it, and which, in fact, would long continue to require all its efforts. On the other hand, Verdier was entreating him to approach nearer Gerona, and this he prepared to do, being aware that Blake's immediate object, after collecting the runaways from Belchite, must be to introduce supplies and reinforcements into the besieged city. His first care was to send the sick and wounded to Barcelona,

the only place where they could be in safety. This done, no time was lost in breaking up from quarters which he was unwilling to abandon; for though the want of meat and wine had been severely felt there by the troops and officers, as well as by the invalids, there had been no lack of bread; and the country through which they had to pass not being practicable for carriages of any kind, no more could be taken with them than the soldiers could carry for themselves. The movement was so luckily timed, that they reached S. Coloma de Farnes, just as a small detachment of Blake's army arrived there, escorting some 1200 cattle to Gerona: the whole convoy fell into their hands, with an abundance of wine also, the want of which is felt by the French soldiers more severely than any other privation.

CHAP.  
XXVI.1808.  
June.

June 18.

St. Cyr,  
167—172.

St. Cyr's head-quarters were now at Caldas de Malavella, and he occupied a line extending from Oña in advance of Bruñola to S. Feliu de Guixols, of which place his troops took possession at this time, after a brave but ineffectual resistance. It was a point of considerable importance, being the port most convenient for those Spanish vessels which cut off the communication between France and Barcelona for all ships which were not under a strong escort. Palamos was of still more importance at this juncture, because from thence Gerona communicated by sea with Tarragona. This place was attacked by Italian troops under General

*Palamos  
taken by the  
French.*

CHAP.  
XXVI.1809.  
June.St. Cyr,  
173, 180.Assault of  
Monjuic.

Fontane; it was carried by assault, and the only persons who were spared were the few who threw themselves into the sea, and were received prisoners when the fury of the invaders had spent itself\*. On the other hand, the Catalans were not always unsuccessful in their endeavours to annoy the invaders. Rovira, formerly a canon, and therefore called Doctor Colonel Rovira (one of the most able and enterprising partizans who appeared during the contest), intercepted a convoy and a train of artillery horses, to supply the loss of which St. Cyr was obliged to part with the horses belonging to his corps. And a battalion which Augereau had sent to fix up proclamations in the villages beyond the frontier, was routed by Colonel Porta before it had disposed of three of its papers. Augereau having, in the campaign of 1794, served in that province, and left a good name there, had counted upon the effect of his proclamations, not considering that he was now engaged in a cause in which every heart and every understanding, every principle and every feeling, were against him.

Verdier meantime prosecuted the siege, in

\* Marshal St. Cyr has the following remark upon this carnage, after observing that it proved useful as an example to other towns: *La gloire de défendre ses foyers domestiques, menacés par l'étranger, est grande, la plus grande de toutes, peut-être: mais la vertu qui y fait prétendre, ne serait point la première des vertus,*

*si elle pouvait être pratiquée sans péril.* It must cost the heart something to reason thus even in a just war. Marshal St. Cyr tells us, indeed, that *le soldat devient naturellement cruel à la longue:* . . the more careful, therefore, should he be not to sear his feelings and his conscience by such reflections as this.

full expectation of bringing it to a speedy conclusion. The outworks were soon rendered untenable, and the redoubts which covered the front of Monjuic were carried with a facility which made him undervalue his opponents. At the beginning of July, three batteries played upon three sides of this little fortress: that which was planted against the north front consisted of twenty four-and-twenty pounders; while the French were battering it, the angle upon which the flag was hoisted fell into the ditch; D. Mariano Montorro descended for it in the midst of the fire, brought it up in safety, and replanted it upon the wall. The breach was soon wide enough for forty men abreast. The fire of the garrison had ceased, for they perceived that the French were secured by their trenches, and powder was too precious to be used unless its effects were certain: the enemy, who had not learned the temper of the men with whom they were contending, judged from this silence, that their hearts or ammunition had failed, and in the night between the fourth and fifth they assaulted the breach. But it was for this that the garrison had reserved their fire, and they poured it so destructively upon the columns which approached, that the French retreated with great loss. For three days they continued their fire upon the breach. Between two and three on the morning of the 8th, 6000 men again assaulted it; and at the same time

CHAP.  
XXVI.1809.  
July.St. Cyr,  
175.

CHAP.  
XXVI.

1809.  
July.

the town was bombarded \*. D. Blas de Furnas, second in command at Monjuic, was in the thickest of the fight; he strained his voice till from exertion it totally failed, but still his presence and his actions encouraged all who saw him. The enemy came on, filled the fosse, and proceeded to the breach. . . "Woe to him," says Samaniego, the historian of the siege, and himself one of the besieged, "woe to him who sets his foot upon the fosse of Monjuic!" A mortar, which lay masked among the ruins of the ravelin, and discharged 500 musket-balls at every shot, was played full upon the enemy by D. Juan Candy, and the havoc which it made was tremendous. Three times during that day the assault was repeated, with the utmost resolution on the part of the assailants, who were never thrown into confusion, though all their efforts were unavailing, and though they left 1600 of their number slain. The day, however, was disastrous to the Geronans also, though not from any evil which it was possible for strength or courage to have averted. The tower of St. Juan, which stood between the west curtain of the castle, the city, and the

\* An instance of heroism worthy of record was displayed by Luciano Aucio, a drummer belonging to the artillery, who was stationed to give the alarm whenever a shell was thrown: a ball struck off his leg at the knee; but when the women came to remove

him, he cried out, "No, no; my arms are left, and I can still beat the drum to give my comrades warning in time for them to save themselves!" This brave lad was the only person during the siege who recovered after an amputation of the thigh.

Calle de Pedret, was blown up. In what manner the magazine took fire was never known. Part of its little garrison were fortunately employed in active service elsewhere; the rest were buried in the ruins, from whence twenty-three persons were extricated alive amid the incessant fire which the enemy kept up upon the spot. Their preservation was in great measure owing to the exertions of D. Carlos Bera-mendi. The company of St. Barbara distinguished themselves that day : covered with dust and blood, under the burning heat of July, and through the incessant fire of the batteries and musketry, they carried water and wine to the soldiers, and bore back the wounded.

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CHAP.  
XXVI.

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1809.  
*July.*

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The severe loss which the French sustained in this second attempt convinced them, that while one stone remained upon another, Mon-juic was not to be taken by assault. From this time, therefore, they continued to batter it on three sides ; and, practising the surest and most destructive mode of warfare, stationed sharpshooters in their trenches on every side, so that for one of the garrison to be seen was almost certain death. So perilous was the service become, that the centinels were changed every half hour, yet nine were killed in one day at one post, and scarcely one escaped unwounded. It became at length impossible to observe the operations of the enemy, so thick were their marksmen, and with such fatal certainty did they take their aim ; no other means remained

CHAP.  
XXVI.

1809.  
July.

than that of sending some one into the fosse, who, lifting up his head with the most imminent hazard, took a momentary glance. By the beginning of August the besiegers had pushed their parallels to the edge of the fosse; their labour was impeded by the stony soil, which rendered it necessary to bring earth from some distance; for this, however, they had hands enough, and they had no apprehension to hurry and disturb them, that any army powerful enough to raise the siege could be brought against them.

*Succours  
intercepted.*

Meantime the Spaniards were preparing for an attempt to introduce succours. For this purpose they threatened the right of the covering army, hoping to draw their attention upon that point, while 1500 men passed through the French line near Llagostera, where General Pino had his head-quarters. They succeeded perfectly in this difficult attempt, through their knowledge of the country, . . . but a straggler who lagged behind fell into the enemy's hand, and upon information which was obtained from him, it was understood that they would direct their course to Castellar de la Selva, and endeavour to pass through the besieging army in the night. There was time to take measures for intercepting them, and being turned aside from thence at nightfall, when they were beginning to debouche, they fell in at daybreak with Pino, who was in pursuit, and scarcely a third escaped: the rest were made prisoners, and

sent into France. It was learnt from the prisoners that the Spaniards did not intend to make any serious effort for raising the siege till the besiegers should be weakened by those diseases which the season would infallibly produce. Reports, nevertheless, were current that such an effort would be made on Santiago's day, when the patron of Spain might be expected once more to inspire or assist his faithful votaries. The French would have deemed themselves fortunate if this report had been verified; for according to the barbarous system of warfare which Buonaparte pursued, they were left to provide subsistence for themselves as they could; . . the soldiers had to cut the corn, thresh it, and grind it for themselves; and though St. Cyr had given orders that biscuit for four days' consumption should always be kept in readiness, in case it should be necessary to collect the army for the purpose of giving battle, not more than half that quantity could ever be provided. More than once also ammunition became scarce, great part coming from Toulouse, and even from so remote a point as Strasbourg. Unhappily the Spaniards were in no condition to profit by the embarrassments of the enemy; and nothing was done by England for Catalonia, where, during the first years of the struggle, so much might have been done with effect. The army which in the preceding autumn had been ordered thither from Sicily, and detained by its general for the protection

CHAP.  
XXVI.1809.  
July.

July 11.

St. Cyr,  
164.Vol. ii. p.  
328.



CHAP.  
XXVI.

1809.  
July.

of that island, was employed at this time in an expedition against Naples, as a diversion in favour of the Austrians; and thus the means which might have saved Gerona were misdirected.

*The ravelin  
taken.*

Meantime the main attacks of the besiegers were directed against the ravelin which was now the main defence of Monjuic. While it was possible to maintain it, the garrison contended who should be stationed there, as at the post of honour. It was repeatedly attacked by night, but the defenders were always ready, and always repulsed the assailants. It was now discovered that the enemy were mining; this was distinctly ascertained by the sounds which were heard in the direction of the fosse. The castle was founded upon a rock, and therefore the officers apprehended no immediate danger from operations of this nature. The purpose of the French was to destroy a breast-work which protected that gate of the castle through which was the passage to the ravelin: the breast-work was almost wholly of earth, and its explosion did no hurt, but it left the gate exposed. A battery, already prepared, began to play upon it, and the communication between the castle and the ravelin was thus rendered exceedingly difficult. A sally was made against this battery, and the guns were spiked; a priest was one of the foremost in this adventure: he received a ball in his thigh, and fell; the enemy pressed on to kill him; one of their officers, at the hazard of his

own life; protected him, and in this act of humane interference was slain by the Spaniards, . . . a circumstance which their journalists recorded with becoming regret. The success which had been obtained was of little avail, for the French had artillery in abundance : in the course of a few hours they mounted other pieces in place of those which had been rendered useless, and continued their fire upon the gate and the ravelin. At the same time they formed a covered way from their own parapet to the breach of the ravelin ; by this, on the night between the 4th and 5th of August they poured a sufficient body of troops through the breach to overpower the forty men who were stationed there ; but having won the place, they could not maintain it, exposed as it was to musketry from the castle. It was, therefore, left for the dead who covered it. About forty hours afterwards, a few Spaniards determined to go and bring off the arms which the French had not had time to carry away ; they found a lad of sixteen who had lain thus long among the carcasses ; he was the only one of his comrades who escaped death or captivity, . . . they brought him off, and he was sent to the hospital half dead with exhaustion.

The guns of Monjuic had now been silenced ; the enemy were so near, that sometimes the Spaniards knocked them down with stones : it was with difficulty that the governor, D. Guil-  
 lherme Nasch, could restrain his men : impatient at remaining inactive, they earnestly solicited

CHAP.  
XXVI.

1809.  
August.

*Monjuic  
abandoned.*

CHAP.  
XXVI.1809.  
August.

permission to sally out upon the most desperate attempts. The garrison had held out seven-and-thirty days since a practicable breach was made. A week had elapsed since the ravelin was lost, and three sides of the castle were now entirely in ruins ; there was little water left, and that little foul and unwholesome ; the number of soldiers was every day diminished by disease as well as by the chances of war. Under these circumstances, the governor deemed it his duty to preserve the men who were still left, that they might assist in the defence of the city. On the evening of the 11th he abandoned the ruins, and retired into Gerona, every man taking with him two hand-grenades and as many cartridges as he could carry. Matches were left in the magazine, and the retreat was effected with only the loss of one man, who was killed by a shell when he had entered the gates.

*Verdier expects the town to fall.*

Elated with this success, . . a success dearly purchased, and bringing no glory to the conqueror, . . Verdier assured his government that Gerona could not now hold out longer than from eight to fifteen days. He planted one battery against the bulwark of St. Pedro, and another upon Monjuic, which commanded all the works in the plain, and the whole line of the city from St. Pedro to the tower of Gironella. Other batteries, placed by St. Daniel's Tower, commanded Fort Calvary, the Castle of the Constable, and one of its advanced posts. While they were forming these, and throwing up works

nearer the city than they could approach before the fall of Monjuic, a little respite was necessarily afforded to the besieged ; but, that no rest might be given them, shells were thrown in from time to time by night and day. From the commencement of the siege Alvarez had felt the want of men, and had repeatedly solicited a reinforcement of 2000 ; even then the garrison would hardly have amounted to half its complement. Nothing but the want of men prevented him from making more frequent sallies, . . in all that were made, the desperate courage and high sense of duty which inspired the Spaniards gave them a decided advantage. “ Never,” said he, in his report to the government, “ never have I seen the precious enthusiasm of all who are within this city abated even for a moment ; and a thousand times would they have sallied out, if I had not, because of their scanty numbers, been compelled to forbid them.” Just after the fall of Monjuic, D. Ramon Foxa, and D. Jose Cantera, brought him 700 men, a trifling number considering the state of Gerona, and the importance of defending it ; but they were volunteers, and went with willing and prepared minds to make the sacrifice which was required of them.

Alvarez now planted upon the roof of the cathedral a battery of three cannon. The little opposition which was made to this as an act of profanation was soon overcome, for the clergy felt that, as when fighting in the field, they were

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August.*A battery  
planted on  
the cathe-  
dral.*

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*August.*

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employed in the service of the altar, so, in such a war, the temple could not be desecrated by using it as a fortress. Till now a watch had been kept upon the tower, to observe the movements of the enemy, and ring the alarm whenever an attack was about to be made. It was composed of the clergy of the cathedral, with one of the Canons at their head : now that the battery was planted there, this guard made their station a place of arms also, and annoyed the besiegers with musketry. The cathedral had been hitherto the hospital for wounded officers ; it now became necessary to remove them to a safer quarter, for the enemy directed their fire thither with a perseverance that discovered how much they were annoyed from thence. In the frequent removal of the hospitals which the bombardment occasioned, the company of St. Barbara was of the most essential service ; throughout the whole siege, these heroic women shrunk from no duty, however laborious, however perilous, or however painful. Three of the leaders are especially mentioned, Dona Lucia Joana de Fitzgérald, D. Mariangela Vivern, and D. Maria Custi, commandants of the three divisions of St. Narcis, St. Dorothy, and St. Eulalia.

At the end of August, several breaches had been made by the batteries of Monjuic, and it was every day apprehended that they would be made practicable. Alvarez then declared in his general orders, that if any of the defenders flinched from the breach when it was attacked,

they should immediately be considered as enemies, and fired upon accordingly. The besiegers continually constructed new works, they had troops at command, artillery in abundance, and engineers of the greatest skill. The garrison was considerably reduced; the hospitals were no longer able to contain the numbers who required admission: the contagion increased, and became more virulent; the magazines were exhausted of all their provisions except wheat and a little flour, and famine began to be severely felt. Not a word of capitulation was permitted within the city, nor a thought of it entertained; but Blake was well aware that it was now absolutely necessary to make a great effort for the relief of the place, and throw in troops and supplies. This was exceedingly difficult; for, although the enemy occupied an extensive line, it might easily be contracted, and they would certainly employ their whole force to prevent the entrance of supplies into a place which they had strictly blockaded for more than three months. The only means of succeeding would be to divert their attention upon various points, and make them suppose that the Spaniards intended to give battle in the quarter directly opposite to that by which the convoy was to proceed. Blake's head-quarters were at S. Ilari when he began his movements; he ordered Don Manuel Llanden, lieutenant of the regiment of Ultonia, with as many troops as could be allotted for this service, and as many of the Somatenes as he

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August.*Distress of  
the city.**Attempt to  
introduce  
succours.*

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August.**

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could collect on the way, to march to the heights of Los Angeles, which are north of Gerona, dislodge the enemy from that position, where they had only a small body of infantry, and protect the convoy which was to be introduced on that side. Blake then advanced two hours' march towards the Ermida, or Chapel of Pradro, with the reserve, that he might be ready to give assistance wherever it was wanted; from thence he dispatched the colonel of the regiment of Ultonia, D. Enrique O'Donnell, with 1200 foot and a few cavalry, to attack the French at Bruñolas, his object being to make them suppose that the convoy was proceeding in that direction.

*Sept. 1.*

O'Donnell, by the error of his guides, was led more than two hours' march out of the direct road, and thus prevented from attacking the enemy at daybreak, according to his intention. This, however, did not frustrate the plan. Bruñolas was a strong position, the enemy were posted in two bodies, and they had a redoubt with entrenchments on the top of the mountain. Stationing one part of his men at the foot of the ascent, to defeat the purpose of the enemy, which he perceived was to attack his principal column in flank, he ordered Sarsfield, with the greater part of his force, to attack the French in front; it was done with complete success; they were driven from their entrenchments, and reinforcements came hastening towards them, this, as Blake had designed, being supposed to

be the point which it was of most importance to secure. O'Donnell having succeeded in this diversion, now descended into the plain, lest he should be turned by superior numbers. There was some difficulty in the descent, owing to its steepness and the proximity of the enemy, nevertheless it was effected in perfect order, and having reached the plain, he halted, and formed in order of battle. Another division of the Spaniards under General Loygorri joined him, and they continued in that position to occupy the attention of the French, and draw more of their troops from the side of the Ter during the whole of the day.

While O'Donnell thus successfully executed his orders on one side, D. Juan Claros acted on another in concert with the Doctor Colonel Rovira. Rovira dislodged the enemy from the castle of Montagut, which they had fortified. Claros at the same time attacked them on the left bank of the Ter, dislodged them from the height which they occupied on that part of the river, killed the Westphalian General Hadelin, burnt their encampments at Sarria and Montrospe, and won the battery of Casa Enroca. Llanden meantime obtained possession of the heights of Los Angeles: this opened a way for the convoy, with which Garcia Conde, at the head of 4000 foot and 500 horse, advanced from Amer, crossed the Ter, and hastened along the right bank toward Gerona. The attention of the enemy had been so well diverted by the

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September.*Garcia  
Conde en-  
ters with  
reinforce-  
ments.*



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*September.*

attacks on other points, that the Spaniards were enabled to break through the force which had been left there, set fire to the tents, and effect their entrance. Six hundred men sallied at the same time from the city to the plain of Salt, partly to assist in confusing the enemy, but more for the purpose of restoring water to the only two mills within the walls. In this they failed; for, since the French had broken the water-courses, it was discovered that the weather had completed their destruction; . . . had not this detachment thus uselessly employed their time, they might have carried off the besiegers' magazines from Salt.

*Inadequacy  
of this re-  
lief.*

These operations, so honourable to Blake who planned, and to the officers who executed them, were performed during a day of heavy and incessant rain, which concealed their movements from the enemy. Of the troops who got into Gerona, 3000 remained there. Alvarez did not conceal from them the desperate nature of the service upon which they had entered; he addressed both officers and men, telling them, that if any one among them dreaded the thoughts of death, now was the time to leave the city, for the Geronans and their defenders had sworn to perish rather than surrender, and he asked if they were willing to swear the like? They readily took the oath. Conde, with the rest of the army and the beasts of the convoy, accomplished his return as happily as his entrance. Of all Blake's actions this was the only one which

was completely successful. But more might have been done, and ought to have been attempted. If he had given the French battle, a victory would have delivered Gerona; and a defeat could only have produced the dispersion of his own troops, in a country which they knew, where every man was friendly to them, and where they would presently have re-assembled. He had little to lose, and every thing to gain. Even if, instead of retreating as soon as his object of introducing supplies was effected, he had continued to threaten the enemy, without risking an action, an opportunity of attacking them at advantage must have been given him; for of the two days' biscuit which had been reserved for such an occasion, one had been consumed, and the French army could not have been kept together for want of supplies. Blake was highly and deservedly extolled for the skill with which he had conducted his operations; but the attempt, though it had succeeded in all parts, was miserably inadequate to the object. The stores, which after so much preparation and with such skilful movements had been introduced, contained only a supply for fifteen days. Hopes indeed were held out of others which were to follow, but it was impossible not to perceive that the enemy would be more vigilant hereafter, and that the introduction of a second convoy would be rendered far more difficult than that of the first. Alvarez was so well convinced of this, that he immediately reduced the rations

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*September.*

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1800.

*September.**St. Cyr,*  
231.*Los Angeles*  
*taken, and*  
*the garrison*  
*put to the*  
*sword.**St. Cyr,*  
243.*Id. 262.*

one half, preparing at once with invincible resolution for the extremity which he knew was now to be expected ; and then, it is said, that for the first time there was some desertion from the Spanish troops.

The Spaniards, after the late action, had occupied with 500 men the convent of N. Señora de los Angeles, which was situated upon the highest ground in the vicinity, and having been fortified, was now an important point, as facilitating both ingress and egress for the besieged, while it remained in their hands. Mazuchelli, therefore, with the Italian troops, was ordered to take it. According to his statement the Spanish commandant Llanden fired upon the officer who summoned him ; and therefore when the post was carried, after a brave resistance, every man was put to the sword except three officers, whom the Italian commander saved, and Llanden himself, who leapt from one of the church-windows, and effected his escape. The Italian soldiers had become mercilessly ferocious in the course of this war, exasperated, it is said, by the murder of some of their sick and wounded who had fallen into the hands of Rovira and other guerilla chiefs. In these dreadful cases, where cruelty excites revenge, and revenge provokes fresh cruelty, there is a fearful accumulation of guilt on all the parties who thus aggravate the evils of war : but that the inhumanity of the invaders was carried on upon a wider scale, that it was systematically encouraged and some-

times enjoined, and that it extended to women and even children, is as certain . . . as that the provocation was given by them, and the example set, . . . an example which neither the Spaniards nor Portuguese were likely to be slow in following. The enemy were less fortunate in an attack upon the irregular forces under Claros and Rovira, who with incessant activity intercepted their communication with Figueras. Verdier attacked them at S. Gregori, where they were well posted and well commanded, for these leaders were men well fitted for the sort of warfare in which they were engaged, and the French were compelled to retire with the loss of one of their generals.

CHAP.  
XXVI.1800.  
September.

The besiegers were at this time compelled for want of ammunition to suspend their efforts till a supply could be received from France. The time was not lost by the garrison in strengthening their works, works however which derived their main strength from the unconquerable spirit of the inhabitants. When the supplies arrived the enemy directed their fire upon the three points of St. Lucia, St. Cristobal, and the Quartel de Alemanes, or Quarter of the Germans. This latter building rested in part of its foundation upon the wall itself, and the object of the enemy was to beat it down, that they might enter over its ruins as by a bridge. The fire from the cathedral, from the Sarracinas, and from the tower of Gironella, was well kept up in return; but the French had so greatly the

*Unsuccessful sally.*

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XXVI.1809.  
*September.**Sept. 15.*

advantage both in the number and size of their artillery, that Alvarez ordered a sally, in the hope of spiking their guns. That it might be the more unexpected, the gate of S. Pedro, which had been walled up since the loss of Monjuic, was re-opened, and the Spaniards advanced with such rapidity upon the enemy's works, that the attack was made almost as soon as they were seen. In many points it was successful, in some the Spaniards failed, and when they were thrown into confusion they were unable to rally. In some few of the persons chosen for the sally, something worse than want of discipline discovered itself, . . they lagged behind in the assault, and, without sharing the danger, fell in with their braver comrades on their return. So much was done, and so much more must have been effected, if all had behaved equally well, that Colonel Marshal, an Englishman in the Spanish service, exclaimed, "We have lost a great victory!"

*The French  
repulsed in  
a general  
assault.*

The guns which had been rendered useless were soon replaced, and an incessant fire was kept up upon the three great breaches; on the 18th, the French engineers declared that all three were practicable. Monjuic had taught the enemy not to be too confident of success; the breaches indeed were of such magnitude that it seemed scarcely possible they should fail in storming them, but they knew that victory must be dearly purchased. In the evening, therefore, they sent a white flag; it was not noticed

from the town, and the officers who accompanied it made signs to the Spaniards; there was no firing at this time, and the men, both of the besieging army and the town, were looking silently and intently on, to await the issue. Alvarez at length sent a verbal order to the French officers to retire, . . . they requested to be heard, and were told from the walls to retire on peril of their lives; they persisted in offering a letter, and then both the castle of the Constable and the tower of Gironella fired. As soon as the officers reached their own lines, the batteries were again opened, some upon the breaches, others throwing shells into the town. During the night this was kept up, and the enemy collected troops upon the heights of Campdura and in Monjuic, for the assault. At daybreak they were seen in motion in different parts, with the purpose, it was supposed, of calling off attention from the real points of danger. The whole forenoon was employed in preparation. Between three and four, the watch on the cathedral informed Alvarez that troops were descending from Monjuic to St. Daniel. At the same time the like intelligence arrived from the forts of the Constable and of the Capuchines; and another messenger from the cathedral followed, with tidings that the enemy were advancing in force both from Monjuic and St. Daniel against the breaches, and that many of them carried instruments for sapping.

The alarm was now rung from the cathedral,

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September.

Sept. 19.

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XXVI.1800.  
*September.*

and beaten through the streets; there was scarcely any interval between the alarm and the attack, so near to the walls were the points of which the enemy were in possession: 2000 men came on straight from Monjuic, an equal number advanced between Monjuic and St. Daniel, a third body from S. Miguel; at the same time a movement of troops was seen in the woods of Palau; they advanced against the three bridges, the Puerto de Francia, and forts Calvary and Cabildo. It was not without surprise that the enemy found the Geronans prepared to receive them at all these points. Nasch, the defender of Monjuic, had his post at the Quartel de Alemanes, where one of the principal breaches was made. Colonel Marshall was at the breach of St. Lucia; a company of crusaders, composed entirely of clergy, were stationed at the breach of St. Cristobal; the rest of the garrison, and crusaders, and all the other townsmen manned the walls. The company of St. Barbara were distributed among the different posts, to perform their important functions, and proclamations were made, inviting the other women of Gerona to assist them in this awful hour.

At the Quartel de Alemanes the enemy mounted the breach with the utmost resolution, and they succeeded in forcing their way into the first quadrangle of that great building; the French batteries continued to play upon the walls and the buildings adjoining the breach,

and a huge fragment fell upon those who were foremost in the assault, just at the moment when part of the Ultonia regiment was about to charge them: a few of the Spaniards were buried with them in the ruins. The Geronans then rushed on, drove back the enemy, presented themselves in the breach, and fought hand to hand with the assailants. Frequently such was the press of the conflict, and such the passion which inspired them, that impatient of the time required for reloading their muskets, the defendants caught up stones from the breach, and brained their enemies with these readier weapons. Four times the assault was repeated in the course of two hours, and at every point the enemy were beaten off. Alvarez, during the whole assault, hastened from post to post, wherever there was most need of his presence, providing every thing, directing all and encouraging all; he had prepared cressets to light up the walls and breaches in case the enemy should persist in their attempt after darkness closed; but they withdrew long before night set in, hastily and in disorder, leaving 800 of their best men slain. Among them was that Colonel Floresti, whom this very Mariano Alvarez had admitted into Monjuic at Barcelona, when the French took their treacherous possession of that fortress.

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*September.**See vol. i.  
p. 201.*

Of the besieged forty-four fell in this glorious day, and 197 were wounded. Our brave countryman, Colonel Marshall, died of his



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*September.*

wounds, as did D. Ricardo Maccarty, another officer of the same regiment, who was Irish either by birth or extraction. A glorious success had been gained, one that filled the conquerors with the highest and most ennobling pride ; this joy it brought with it, but it brought no rest, no respite, scarcely even a prolongation of hope. There was neither wine to distribute to the soldiers after their exertions, nor even bread ; a scanty mess of pulse or corn, with a little oil, or a morsel of bacon in its stead, was all that could be served out, .. and this not from the public magazines, but given by the inhabitants, who, in the general extremity, shared their stores with the soldiers, lamenting that they had nothing better to bestow. “What matters it?” said these brave Spaniards, “the joy of having saved Gerona to-day will give us strength to go on !” A party went out to bring in any of the wounded enemies who might have been left among the dead ; one had been stript by a miquelet, but upon perceiving what was the object of their search, he discovered himself to be living. “Having been wounded,” he said, “he feigned death as the only chance of escaping death, for he had been led to believe that the miquelets and the peasants gave no quarter.” The man who had stripped him happened to be present when he spoke ; he immediately re-clothed him, ran to bring him water, and took charge of him till he could be removed to the hospital. While the

Spaniards were employed in this humane office, a fire was opened upon them from the enemy's works, occasioned, no doubt, by some error of the French centinels: it drove them in, and the remainder of the wounded were consequently left to perish. One wretched German, by the breach of St. Lucia, lay groaning for twenty hours before death relieved him.

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The loss which they had sustained in this assault thoroughly discouraged the besiegers; and when St. Cyr, for the sake of proving to the Spaniards that he was not to be outdone by them in perseverance, would have made a second effort, the officers whom he consulted were unanimously of opinion that it ought not again to be attempted. The Marshal, however unwilling to make an acknowledgement so honourable to the people against whom he was employed, was compelled then to admit that Gerona could only be reduced by famine, and to determine upon pursuing that course, which of all others is the most wearying to the soldiers, and the most painful to a general who has not extinguished in himself all sense of humanity. Every day now added to the distress of the besieged. Their flour was exhausted; wheat they had still in store, but men are so much the slaves of habit, that it was considered as one great evil of the siege, that they had no means of grinding it; two horse-mills, which had been erected, were of such clumsy construction, that they did not perform half the

*St. Cyr resolves to reduce the city by famine.*

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*September.*

needful work, and the Geronans, rather than prepare the unground corn in any way to which they had not been accustomed, submitted to the labour of grinding it between two stones, or pounding it in the shell of a bomb with a cannon-ball. For want of other animal food, mules and horses were slaughtered for the hospital and for the shambles; a list was made of all within the city, and they were taken by lot. Fuel was exceedingly scarce, yet the heaps which were placed in cressets at the corners of the principal streets, to illuminate them in case of danger, remained untouched, and not a billet was taken from them during the whole siege. The summer fever became more prevalent; the bodies of the sufferers were frequently covered with a minute eruption, which was usually a fatal symptom: fluxes also began to prevail\*.

*O'Donnell  
enters the  
city.*

The hope of relief was the only thing talked of in Gerona, and day and night the people, as well as the watchmen, looked eagerly on all sides for the succours of which they were so greatly in need, and which they knew Blake was preparing. That general, on the 21st of September, had assembled a convoy at Hostalrich; on the morning of the 26th a firing was heard towards

\* Two singular cases of contusion of the brain were observed at this time in the hospitals: one man did nothing but count with a loud and deliberate voice from forty to seventy, always beginning at one number and ending at the other, and this incessantly through the whole night. An-

other continually uttered the most extraordinary blasphemies and curses, exhausting the whole vocabulary of malediction, without any apparent emotion of anger: this case did not prove fatal, but the man was left in a state of helpless idiocy.

Los Angeles, and a strong body of the garrison sallied out to assist the convoy. Wimpfen had the command of the advancing army. When they reached the heights of S. Pelayo, before La Bisbal, O'Donnell was sent forward, with 1000 men, to open a way through the enemy: this officer, who was generally not less successful than enterprising in his attempts, broke through the enemy, set fire to one of their encampments, and made way for 160 laden beasts, which entered safely through the Puerta del Areny. The joy of the besieged was but of short endurance; they looked to see more troops and more supplies hastening on: 10,000 men they knew had been sent upon this service, 1000 had effected their part, why could not the nine follow? After gazing for hours in vain, they could no longer deceive themselves with hope; it was but too certain that the rest of the convoy had been intercepted. They then began to censure the general who had attempted to introduce it on that side, where the way was craggy, and led through such defiles, that a handful of men would be sufficient to defeat his purpose: their disappointment vented itself in exclamations against Blake, and they blamed him for remaining at the head of an army after so many repeated misfortunes as he had sustained. That general was not more censured by the Catalans than by the enemy for his conduct during the siege. The French condemned his want of promptitude and enterprise,

CHAP.  
XXVI.1809.  
September.*Failure of  
the attempt  
to relieve it.*

CHAP.  
XXVI.1809.  
*September.**St. Cyr,*  
262.*St. Cyr*  
*gives up the*  
*command to*  
*Augereau.*

being conscious themselves that for want of resources they must have been seriously endangered, if they had been repeatedly and vigorously attacked, or even threatened. But Blake, after the panic at Belchite, could have no confidence in his men : nor was this his only misfortune ; though in other respects a good officer, he wanted that presence of mind which is the most essential requisite for a commander, and he was therefore better qualified to plan a campaign than to execute his own arrangements. When he succeeded in the former attempt for relieving Gerona, if the fair occasion had been seized the enemy might have then been compelled to raise the siege ; but it was let pass for want of alacrity and hope. This second effort was miserably unsuccessful ; nine parts of the convoy fell into the enemy's hand, and there was a loss of more than 3000 men, for the Italians gave no quarter. St. Cyr thought that the men who had got into the city could not possibly retreat from it, and must therefore accelerate its surrender ; and believing that the business of the siege was done, he went to Perpignan for the purpose of making arrangements for the better supply of the army, and getting rid of an irksome command which his successor seemed in no haste to assume. His situation had long been painful. The service itself was one to which no casuistry could reconcile an honourable mind ; the system of preying upon the country gave a barbarous character to it,

which, if the cause itself had been less odious, must have been intolerable to one bred up in those feelings and observances by which the evils of war were mitigated: and if Marshal St. Cyr had been insensible to these reflections, he had much personal mortification to endure. There was reason to suspect that the army was neglected, because he was an object of displeasure to the government which employed him; and he was made to feel that the officers under him were, for his sake, debarred from the honours and advancement which they were entitled to expect. Finding therefore that Augereau was not incapacitated by ill health from assuming the command, he communicated to him his determination of holding it no longer, and was rewarded for his services by two years of disgrace and exile.

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1809.  
*September.*

*St. Cyr,*  
264, 268.

Marshal Augereau had not been many hours before Gerona when O'Donnell with his thousand men broke through the besieging army, and accomplished his retreat more daringly and not less successfully than he had effected his entrance. It was O'Donnell who first formed the Geronans into companies, and disciplined them: he had not remained in the city during the siege, because it was rightly thought he would be better able to assist it from without; and he had displayed such skill and intrepidity in intercepting a convoy at Mascara, in concert with Rovira, that the Central Junta promoted him to the rank of brigadier. When, in the

*O'Donne*  
*effects his*  
*retreat.*

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*September.*

Oct. 13.

unhappy attempt at relieving the city, he and his division only had entered, he took up his station between the fort of the Capuchins and of La Reynana; but Gerona stood in need of provisions, not men; a thousand troops added nothing to her useful strength, the Geronans were strong enough without them to resist an assault if another were made; with them they were not numerous enough to sally and raise the siege; the continuance of O'Donnell then could only serve to hasten the fall of the city, by increasing the consumption of its scanty stores, and to weaken his own men by the privations in which they shared. It was agreed, therefore, with Alvarez that he should cut his way through the enemy; and a few families thought it better to follow him in this perilous attempt, than remain in a city where it now became apparent that they who escaped death could not long escape captivity. The place was completely surrounded, so that to elude the enemy was impossible; the only hope was to surprise them, and then force a way. One night, after the moon was down, they left their position in silence: the Geronan centinels at St. Francisco de Paula mistook them for an enemy, and fired: but it is not unlikely that this accident, which might so easily have frustrated the enterprise, facilitated it, by deceiving the French, who, when they heard the alarm given from the city, could never imagine that an attempt was about to be made upon their camp. To make way by

the mountains, O'Donnell knew would be impossible, in the darkness, without confusion; therefore, though the enemy's posts were more numerous on the plain, he judged it safer to take that course. The plan was ably carried into effect; his men surprised the first post, fell upon them with sword and bayonet, not firing a gun, cut them off without giving the alarm, and sparing two prisoners, made them their guides through the encampment. They passed five-and-twenty posts of the enemy, through many of which they forced their way: Souham was surprised in his quarter, and fled in his shirt, leaving behind him as much booty as the Spaniards had time to lay hands on. The alarm spread throughout the whole of the lines, but it was too late; by daybreak the Spaniards reached S. Colona, where Milans was posted with part of Blake's army, and it was not till they were thus placed in safety that a body of 2000 foot and 200 horse, who had been sent in pursuit of them, came up. O'Donnell was promoted to the rank of camp-marshal for this exploit.

But an immediate change took place in the condition of the besieging army under the new commander. Their wants were immediately supplied from France, they were largely reinforced, and encouragement of every kind was given them, as if to show that the disfavour which they had experienced had been wholly intended toward Marshal St. Cyr. Augereau being thus in strength, sent General Pino against

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1809.  
October.

*Magazines  
at Hostal-  
rich taken  
by the  
French.*



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1809.  
October.

*Augereau  
offers fa-  
vourable  
terms.*

the town of Hostalrich, where magazines were collected for Blake's army, and for the relief of Gerona. The town was occupied by 2000 troops ; Blake was too distant to act in support of this important post ; the Spaniards, after a gallant resistance, were driven into the citadel by superior numbers ; the magazines were lost, and the greater part of the town burnt.

The French purchased their success dearly ; but it cut off the last possibility of relief from Gerona. The besieged now died in such numbers, chiefly of dysentery, that the daily deaths were never less than thirty-five, and sometimes amounted to seventy. The way to the burial place was never vacant. Augereau straitened the blockade ; and, that the garrison might neither follow the example of O'Donnell, nor receive any supplies, however small, he drew his lines closer, stretched cords with bells along the interspaces, and kept watch-dogs at all the posts. The bombardment was continued, and always with greater violence during the night than the day, as if to exhaust the Geronans by depriving them of sleep. He found means also of sending letters into the city, sparing no attempts to work upon the hopes and fears of the people ; he told them of his victory at Hostalrich, .. of the hopeless state of Blake's army, .. of the peace which Austria had made ; .. he threatened the most signal vengeance if they persisted in holding out, and he offered to grant an armistice for a month, and suffer supplies

immediately to enter, provided Alvarez would capitulate at the end of that time, if the city were not relieved. There was a humanity in this offer such as no other French general had displayed during the course of the Spanish war; but Alvarez and the Geronans knew their duty too well to accept even such terms as these after the glorious resistance which they had made. With such an enemy, and in such a cause, they knew that no compromise ought to be made: they had devoted themselves for Spain, and it did not become them, for the sake of shortening their own sufferings, to let loose so large a part of the besieging army as this armistice would have left at liberty for other operations.

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*October.*

While the people of Gerona opposed this heroic spirit of endurance to the enemy, an affair took place at sea, which, if it brought no immediate relief to the Catalans, convinced them at least that they were not wholly neglected by Great Britain. Lord Collingwood having obtained intelligence that an attempt would be made from Toulon for throwing supplies into Barcelona, sailed from Minorca about the middle of October, and took his station a few leagues off Cape St. Sebastian, on the coast of Catalonia. On the 23d the enemy's fleet came in sight, consisting of three ships of the line, two frigates, two armed store ships, and a convoy of sixteen sail. Rear Admiral Martin was ordered to

*Destruction  
of a French  
convoy by  
the British  
ships.*

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give chase ; he fell in with the ships of war off the entrance of the Rhone, but they escaped him that night, because the wind blew directly on shore. The next morning he renewed the chase, and drove two of them, one of eighty guns, the other of seventy-four, on shore, off Frontignan, where they were set fire to by their own crews ; the other ship of the line and one frigate ran on shore at the entrance of the port of Cette, where there was little probability that the former could be saved, but they were under protection of the batteries. The second frigate had hauled her wind during the night, and got into Marseilles road.

Two brigs, two bombards, and a ketch belonging to the convoy, were burnt by the Pomona while Admiral Martin was in chase. The other vessels made for the bay of Rosas ; a squadron pursued, and found them moored under the protection of the castle, Fort Trinidad, and several batteries newly erected by the French. Four of these vessels were armed ; the largest was of 600 tons, carrying sixteen nine-pounders, and 110 men ; she was inclosed in boarding nettings, and perfectly prepared for action. The English boats, however, boarded them all, though they were bravely defended, and though a constant fire was kept up from the forts and from the beach. Of the eleven ships, three had landed their cargoes, but all were taken or burnt ; and of the whole convoy

there only escaped the frigate, which put into Marseilles, and one of the store-ships, which probably succeeded in reaching Barcelona.

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It was no unimportant service thus to straiten the French in that city, . . . but it was a success which brought no relief to Gerona, where the devoted inhabitants seemed now abandoned to their fate. Hitherto the few mules and horses which remained unslaughtered had been led out to feed near the walls of St. Francisco de Paula, and of the burial ground : . . . this was now prevented by the batteries of Palau and Montelivi, and by the French advanced posts ; and these wretched animals, being thus deprived of their only food, gnawed the hair from each other's tails and manes before they were led to the shambles. Famine at length did the enemy's work ; the stores from which the citizens had supplied the failure of the magazines were exhausted ; it became necessary to set a guard over the ovens, and the food for the hospitals was sometimes seized upon the way by the famishing populace. The enemy endeavoured to tempt the garrison to desert, by calling out to them to come and eat, and holding out provisions. A few were tempted ; they were received with embraces, and fed in sight of the walls, . . . poor wretches, envying the firmer constancy of their comrades more than those comrades did the food, for lack of which their own vital spirits were well-nigh spent ! None of that individual animosity was

*Increased  
distress of  
the city.*

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here displayed which characterized the street-fighting at Zaragoza, . . the nature of the siege was not such as to call it forth ; and some of those humanities appeared, which in other instances the French generals systematically outraged in Spain. The out-sentries frequently made a truce with each other, laid down their arms, and drew near enough to converse ; the French soldier would then give his half-starved enemy a draught from his leathern bottle, or brandy flask, and when they had drunk and talked together, they returned to their posts, scoffed at each other, proceeded from mockery to insult, and sometimes closed the scene with a skirmish.

*Report of  
the state of  
health.*

The only disgraceful circumstance which occurred during the whole siege was the desertion of ten officers in a body, two of whom were men of noble birth ; they had been plotting to make the governor capitulate, and finding their intentions frustrated, went over to the enemy in open day. Except in this instance, the number of deserters was very small. Towards the end of November many of the inhabitants, having become utterly hopeless of relief, preferred the chance of death to the certainty of being made prisoners, and they ventured to pass the enemy's lines, some failing in the attempt, others being more fortunate. At this time Samaniego, who was first surgeon to the garrison, delivered in to Alvarez a report upon the state of health : as he gave it into his hands, he said

Nov. 29.

something implying the melancholy nature of its contents ; Alvarez replied, “ this paper then, perhaps, will inform posterity of our sufferings, if there should be none left to recount them ! ”

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He then bade Samaniego read it. It was a dreadful report. There did not remain a single building in Gerona which had not been injured by the bombardment ; not a house was habitable ; the people slept in cellars, and vaults, and holes amid the ruins ; and it had not unfrequently happened that the wounded were killed in the hospitals. The streets were broken up ; so that the rain water and the sewers stagnated there, and the pestilential vapours which arose were rendered more noxious by the dead bodies which lay rotting amid the ruins. The siege had now endured seven months ; scarcely a woman had become pregnant during that time ; the very dogs, before hunger consumed them, had ceased to follow after kind ; they did not even fawn upon their masters ; the almost incessant thunder of artillery seemed to make them sensible of the state of the city, and the unnatural atmosphere affected them as well as humankind. It even affected vegetation. In the gardens within the walls the fruits withered, and scarcely any vegetable could be raised. Within the last three weeks above 500 of the garrison had died in the hospitals ; a dysentery was raging and spreading ; the sick were lying upon the ground, without beds, almost without food ; and there was scarcely fuel to dress the

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little wheat that remained, and the few horses which were yet unconsumed. Samaniego then adverted with bitterness to the accounts which had been circulated, that abundant supplies had been thrown into the city; and he concluded by saying, “if by these sacrifices, deserving for ever to be the admiration of history, and if by consummating them with the lives of us who, by the will of Providence, have survived our comrades, the liberty of our country can be secured, happy shall we be in the bosom of eternity and in the memory of good men, and happy will our children be among their fellow-countrymen !”

*Some of the  
outworks  
taken by the  
French.*

The breaches which had been assaulted ten weeks before were still open; it was easier for the Geronans to defend than to repair them, and the French had suffered too much in that assault to repeat it. A fourth had now been made. The enemy, learning from the officers who had deserted that the ammunition of the place was almost expended, ventured upon bolder operations. They took possession by night of the Calle del Carmen; from thence they commanded the bridge of S. Francisco, which was the only means of communication between the old city and that part on the opposite side of the Ter; from thence also they battered Forts Merced and S. Francisco de Paula. During another night they got possession of Fort Calvary, which they had reduced to ruins, and of the Cabildo redoubt: this last success seems to

have been owing to some misconduct, for the historian of the siege inveighs upon this occasion against the pernicious measure of intrusting boys with command, as a reward for the services of their fathers. The city redoubts fell next. The bodily strength as well as the ammunition of the Geronans was almost exhausted, and these advantages over them were gained with comparative ease. The enemy were now close to the walls, and thus cut off the forts of the Capuchins and of the Constable, the only two remaining out-works. The garrisons of both amounted only to 160 men; they had scarcely any powder, little water, and no food. These posts were of the last importance; it was resolved to make a sally for the sake of relieving them, and the garrison of the town gave up for this purpose their own miserable rations, contributing enough for the consumption of three days. The ration was at this time a handful of wheat daily, or sometimes, in its stead, the quarter of a small loaf, and five ounces of horse's or mule's flesh, every alternate day.

The few men who could be allotted for this service, or indeed who were equal to it, sallied in broad day through the Puerto del Socorro, within pistol-shot of the redoubts which the enemy now possessed; they were in three bodies, two of which hastened up the hill toward the two forts, while the third remained to protect them from being attacked in the rear from the Calle del Carmen. The sally was so sudden,

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November.

*Last sally  
of the gar-  
rison.*



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so utterly unlooked for by the besiegers, and so resolutely executed, that its purpose was accomplished, though not without the loss in killed and wounded of about forty men, which was nearly a third of those who were employed in it. This was the last effort of the Geronans. The deaths increased in a dreadful and daily accelerating progression ; the burial-places were without the walls ; it had long been a service of danger to bury the dead, for the French, seeing the way to the cemetery always full, kept up a fire upon it ; hands could not now be found to carry them out to the deposit-house, and from thence to the grave ; and at one time 120 bodies were lying in the deposit-house, uncoffined, in sight of all who passed the walls.

*Alvarez be-  
comes de-  
lirious.*

The besiegers were now erecting one battery more in the Calle de la Rulla ; it was close upon one of the breaches, and commanded the whole space between Forts Merced and S. Francisco de Paula. This was in the beginning of December ; on the 4th Alvarez was seized with a nervous fever, occasioned undoubtedly by the hopeless state of the city. On the 8th the disorder had greatly increased, and he became delirious. The next day the Junta assembled, and one of their body was deputed to examine Samaniego and his colleague Viader, whether the governor was in a state to perform the duties of his office. They required a more specific question ; and the Canon who had been deputed then said, it was feared that, in the access of

delirium, the governor might give orders contrary to his own judgement, if he were in perfect sanity of mind, and contrary to the public weal, when the dreadful situation of the city was considered. The purport of such language could not be mistaken; and they replied, that, without exceeding the bounds of their profession, they could pronounce his state of health to be incompatible with the command, and his continuance in command equally incompatible with the measures necessary for his recovery.

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December.

Samaniego and his colleague went after this consultation to visit the governor, whom they found in such a state that they judged it proper for him to receive the *viaticum*, thinking it most probable that, in the next access of fever, he would lose his senses and die, . . for this was the manner in which the disorder under which he laboured usually terminated. Being thus delivered over to the priests, Alvarez, before the fit came on, resigned the command, which then devolved upon Brigadier D. Julian de Bolivar: a council was held during the night, composed of the two Juntas, military and civil; and the result was, that in the morning, D. Blas de Furnas, an officer who had greatly distinguished himself during the siege, should treat for a capitulation. The whole of the 10th was employed in adjusting the terms. They were in the highest degree honourable. The garrison were to march out with the honours of war, and be sent prisoners into France, to be exchanged as soon

Capitulation.

CHAP.  
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*December.*

as possible for an equal number of French prisoners then detained in Majorca and other places. None were to be considered prisoners except those who were ranked as soldiers; the commissariat, intendants, and medical staff were thus left at freedom. The French were not to be quartered upon the inhabitants; the official papers were neither to be destroyed nor removed; no person was to be injured for the part which he had taken during the siege; those who were not natives of Gerona should be at liberty to leave it, and take with them all their property; the natives also who chose to depart might do so, take with them their moveable property, and dispose as they pleased of the rest.

While the capitulation was going on, many of the enemy's soldiers came to the walls, bringing provisions and wine, to be drawn up by strings, . . an honourable proof of the temper with which they regarded their brave opponents. During the night the deserters who were in Gerona, with many other soldiers and peasants, attempted to escape: some succeeded, others were killed or taken in the attempt, and not a few dropped with weakness upon the way. To those who remained, the very silence of night, it is said, was a thing so unusual, that it became a cause of agitation. At daybreak it was found that the soldiers had broken the greater part of their arms, and thrown the fragments into the streets or the river. When the garrison were drawn up in sight of the French,

their shrunken limbs and hollow eyes and pale and meagre countenances sufficiently manifested by what they had been subdued. The French observed, not without admiration, that in the city, as well as at Monjuic, most of the guns had been fired so often that they were rendered useless; brass itself had given way, says Samaniego, before the constancy of the Geronans.

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December.

The first act of the French officer who was appointed governor was to order all the inhabitants to deliver in their arms, on pain of death, and to establish a military commission. *Te Deum* was ordered in the cathedral; it was performed with tears, and a voice which could difficultly command its utterance. Augereau would fain have had a sermon like that which had been preached before Lasnes at Zaragoza, but not a priest could be found who would sin against his soul by following the impious example. A guard was set upon Alvarez; he amended slowly, and the physicians applied for leave for him to quit the city, and go to some place upon the sea-shore; it was replied, that Marshal Augereau's orders only permitted him to allow the choice of any place on the French frontier, or in the direct road to France. He chose Figueras, and, having recovered sufficiently to bear the removal, was hurried off at midnight without any previous notice, and under a strong escort. The Friars, who had been all confined in the church of St. Francisco, with a cannon pointed against the door, and a match

Dec. 24.

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XXVI.1809.  
*December.*

lighted, were marched off at the same time, in violation of the terms. The sick and wounded Spaniards were hastily removed to St. Daniel; they were laid upon straw, and being left without even such necessaries as they had possessed in the city, except that they were better supplied with food, many died in consequence. There was a grievous want of humanity in this; but no brutal acts of outrage and cruelty were committed, as at Zaragoza; and, when so many of the French generals rendered themselves infamous, Augereau, and the few who observed any of the old humanities of war, deserve to be distinguished from their execrable colleagues.

*Death of  
Alvarez.*

The Central Junta decreed the same honours to Gerona and its heroic defenders as had been conferred in the case of Zaragoza. The rewards which Mariano Alvarez had deserved by his admirable conduct were to be given to his family, if, as there was reason to fear, he himself should not live to receive them. The sad apprehension which was thus expressed was soon verified. He died at Figueras. It was said, and believed, in Catalonia, that Buonaparte had sent orders to execute him in the Plaza at Gerona, and that the French, fearing the consequences if they should thus outrage the national feeling, put him out of the way by poison\*. His death

\* A man deposed that he had seen the body when it was buried hastily, by night; the face, he said, was swollen, and the eyes forced out of their sockets. Supposing this testimony were true, the appearance would denote strangulation rather than poison; but that Alvarez should have been privately murdered is altogether improbable.

was so probable, considering what he had endured during the siege, and the condition in which it left him, that no suspicion of this kind would have prevailed, if the public execution of Santiago Sass and of Hofer, and the private catastrophe of Captain Wright and of Pichegru, had not given dreadful proof that the French government and its agents were capable of any wickedness. In the present imputation they were probably wronged, but it was brought on them by the opinion which their actions had obtained and merited.

About 600 of the garrison made their escape from Rousillon. Eroles was one; than whom no Spaniard rendered greater services to his country during the war, nor has left to posterity a more irreproachable and honourable name.

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XXVI.

1809.  
*December.*

*Eroles  
escapes.*

## CHAPTER XXVII.

PROCEEDINGS IN FRANCE AND IN THE BRITISH  
PARLIAMENT.

1809.

*Buona-  
parte di-  
vorces the  
Empress  
Josephine.*

THE year had thus closed in Spain as triumphantly for the invaders as it began; and yet the French felt, and could not but feel, that the subjugation of that kingdom was more distant at this time than they had supposed it to be when they entered upon the invasion, in the wantonness of insolent power. Buonaparte, when he recapitulated the exploits of the year to his senate, intimated an intention of returning thither to complete the conquest. "When I shall show myself beyond the Pyrenees," said he, "the frightened leopard will fly to the ocean to avoid shame, defeat, and death. The triumph of my arms will be the triumph of the genius of good over that of evil; of moderation, order, and morality, over civil war, anarchy, and the evil passions." He neither mentioned nor alluded to the battle of Talavera; the circumstances of that well-fought field had been so completely concealed from the French nation, that they were fully persuaded the English had suffered a great defeat; but the lesson had not been lost upon Buonaparte. That battle, and the repulse at Esling, made him for the first time

feel the insecure foundation of his power ; it taught him that his armies were not invincible. His hatred for England, implacable as it was, had not prevented him from regarding with admiration the military genius of Marlborough, though he was incapable of appreciating the principles and feelings which induced that excellent commander on every occasion to mitigate by every means in his power the miseries of war. He despised the counsels, and egregiously miscalculated the resources of Great Britain ; but he was compelled in his heart to render reluctant justice to the national spirit, which Vimeiro and Coruña, and the Douro and Talavera, had shewn him could be displayed by her armies no less than by her fleets ; and he could not but secretly and ominously apprehend, that such victories as those of Blenheim and Ramillies might be achieved by such soldiers. It is believed that this feeling determined him to connect himself by marriage with one of the great continental powers. Secret arrangements for this having been made with the house of Austria, he divorced the Empress Josephine at the close of the year by an act of his own government, and with her full acquiescence, reasons of state being made the plea, as they were the motives, for this measure. In the manner of the separation, in the provision which was made, and in the honours which were reserved for Josephine, due regard was shown her : she was a gentle and benevolent woman ; and had Buonaparte in his moral nature been

CHAP.  
XXVII.1809.  
*December.*



CHAP.  
XXVII.1809.  
December.*Farther re-  
quisition  
for the ar-  
mies in  
Spain.*

half as worthy of the throne, the world might have loved and revered the memory of both.

But triumphantly as the war with Austria had been concluded, the prospect of peace was yet far distant. The war-minister reported, that the French armies in Spain consisted of 300 battalions and 150 squadrons, and it would be sufficient, without sending any additional corps, to keep them at their full establishment: 30,000 men collected at Bayonne afforded means for accomplishing this, and for repulsing any force which the English might send to that country. In this state of things, no other levy was necessary than such as would supply the contingent indispensably requisite for replacing in the battalions of the interior the drafts which were daily made from them. There remained from the conscription of the years 1806, 7, 8, 9, 10, more than 80,000 men, who, though ballotted, had not been called into actual service; it was proposed to call out 36,000, and then to declare those classes free from any future call. "By these means, sire," said the minister, "your armies will be maintained at their present strength, and a considerable number of your subjects will be definitively released from the conscription." There were also at the Emperor's disposal 25,000 men, afforded by the conscription for 1811; but upon these it was not proposed to call, unless events should disappoint his pacific intentions.

Thirty thousand men stationed at Bayonne to supply the constant consumption of his army in

Spain, 36,000 to be raised for replacing the drafts from the interior, and 25,000 to be taken by anticipation, before the conscription in its regular course ought to have reached them, and to be held in readiness for farther demands of blood ; this was the prospect held out at the conclusion of the Austrian war ; these were the sacrifices which the French were called upon to make, not for defence, not for the interests, not for the honour of France, but to support a wanton and execrable usurpation, which had no other cause than the individual ambition of Buonaparte. . . . He felt how needful it was to persuade the French that a war which they knew to be so destructive was not as inglorious as it was unjust, and for this purpose a parade was made of the victories which had been obtained in Spain. The flags taken at Espinosa, Burgos, Tudela, Somosierra, and Madrid, were presented to the legislative body ; a detachment of the grenadiers of the imperial guard was introduced, and seated on the right and left of Buonaparte's statue, that the stage might be full. Rhetorical speeches were delivered, and the session concluded like a stage spectacle, with a flourish of trumpets, and cries of Long live the Emperor ! In this exhibition, Buonaparte addressed himself to the ruling passion of the people over whom he reigned. " Without glory," he said, " there could be no happiness for a Frenchman ;" and the moral feeling of the nation had been so debased that they believed glory might be attained

CHAP.  
XXVII.1809.  
December.*Display of  
Spanish  
Flags.*

CHAP.  
XXVII.1810.  
*January.*

in a war thus flagrantly and infamously unjust. The prevailing weakness of his own character also was betrayed in this display ; no other successes were brought forward than those which had been won while he was in Spain ; for though he liberally rewarded his generals in all ways, and left them also at full liberty to enrich themselves by exaction and plunder, he was jealous of any celebrity that they might attain, and desired, more from personal vanity than from political considerations, that in every success the French should look to him, and to him alone, as the author of their victories.

While France was thus rejoicing in the triumphs of its armies, the Central Junta saw the whole extent of their danger, and rested their hopes upon the goodness of their cause and the character of the Spanish nation, with a composure which nothing could shake. Never was a nation more truly represented in its defects and in its virtues, in its strength and in its weakness. While in their administration they committed the same errors, deceiving themselves and others, which in former wars had rendered the Spaniards\* the most inefficient and impracticable of all allies ; their language was that of the lof-

\* Burnet says of the wars in the reign of William III. " The late king told me that in these campaigns the Spaniards were both so ignorant and so backward, so proud and yet so weak, that they would never own their feebleness or their wants to him. They pretended they had stores when they had none ; and thousands when they scarce had hundreds. He had in their councils often desired that they would give him only a true state of their garrisons and magazines ; but they always gave it false ; so that for some

tiest fortitude, and their public papers breathed a spirit worthy of their station. One of the most splendid of these orations was issued during the fearful pause after the defeat of their armies at Ocaña and at Alba de Tormes, when the peace with Austria left Buonaparte at leisure to direct his whole force against Spain. “Our enemies,” said they, “exhort us to submit to the clemency of the conqueror. Because in their own degraded hearts they find nothing but baseness when they are weak, and atrocity when they are strong, they imagine that the Spaniards must abandon all their lofty hopes. Who has told them that our virtue is of so low a standard? Does fortune oppose to us greater obstacles? we will redouble our exertions! Are our dangers augmented? we shall acquire the greater glory! Slaves of Buonaparte, waste not time in sophistries which can deceive no one; speak frankly and say, we will be the most wicked of men, because we believe ourselves the most powerful: . . . this language is consistent and intelligible; but do not attempt to persuade us that the abandonment of our rights is wisdom, and that cowardice is prudence! Submit? . . . Do these sophists know to what they advise the most high-minded nation upon earth? It would be a stain without example in our annals, if after such efforts, such incredible events, we were to

CHAP.  
XXVII.1810.  
January.*Address of  
the Central  
Junta to the  
nation.*

campaigns all was lost, merely because they deceived him in the strength they pretended they had.

At last he believed nothing they said, but sent his own officers to examine everything.” Vol. ii. p. 7.

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*January.*

fall at the feet of the crowned slave who has been sent to us as king. And for what? That from the midst of his banquets, his ruffian parasites, and his prostitutes, he may point out the churches which are to be burnt; the estates which are to be divided among his satellites; the virgins and matrons who are to be taken to his seraglio; the youths who are to be sent as the tribute to the Minotaur of France!

“Spaniards, think not that the Junta speak thus to excite you by the arts of language; what need of words, when things speak for themselves? Your houses are destroyed; your churches demolished; your fields laid waste; your families dispersed and wandering through the country, or hurried into the grave. Have we made so many sacrifices, have the flames of war consumed half Spain, that we should abandon the other half to the far more deadly peace which the enemy prepares for it? For no one will beguile himself with the insidious parade of the improvements which the French hold out. The Tartar who commands them has decreed, that Spain shall have neither industry, nor commerce, nor population, nor political representation whatever: . . . to be made a waste and solitary sheep-walk for supplying French manufactures with our wools; to become a nursery of men who may be hurried away to slaughter; such is the destiny which he would impose upon the most highly favoured of all countries! Shall we then, submitting to this, submit also to the

destruction of our religion ; abandon the interests of heaven and the faith of our fathers to the sacrilegious mockery of these banditti ; and forsake the sanctuary which, during seven centuries, and in a thousand and a thousand battles, our forefathers maintained against the Saracens ? If we should do this, the victims who perished in that contest would cry to us from their graves, Ungrateful and perfidious race, shall our sacrifices be in vain, and is our blood of no estimation in your eyes ? No, patriots ! rest in peace, . . and let not that bitter thought disturb the quiet of your sepulchres !

“ There is no peace, there can be none in this state of things ! That Spain may be free, is the universal wish of the nation ; and if that cannot be obtained, at least it may become one immense desert, one wide grave, where the accumulated remains of French and Spaniards may exhibit to future ages our glory and their shame. But fortune is not so inimical to virtue as to leave to its defenders only this melancholy termination. It is written in heaven, and the history of all ages attests the truth, that a people who decidedly love their liberty and independence must ultimately establish them, in despite of all the artifice and all the violence of tyranny. Victory, which is so often a gift of fortune, is sooner or later the reward of constancy. What defended the little republics of Greece from the barbarous invasion of Xerxes ? What reconstructed the Capitol when it was

CHAP.  
XXVII.1810.  
*January.*

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XXVII.

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*January.*

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almost destroyed by the Gauls? What preserved it from the mighty arms of Hannibal? What, in times nearer our own, protected the Swiss from German tyranny, and gave independence to Holland in spite of the power of our ancestors?

“Spaniards, the Junta announces to you frankly what has happened in the continent, because it would not have you ignorant for a moment of the new danger which threatens the country: they announce it in the confidence, that, instead of being dismayed, you will collect new strength, and show yourselves more worthy of the cause which you defend, and of the admiration of the universe: they announce it to you, because they know that the determination of the Spaniards is to be free at whatever cost; and all means however violent, all resources however extraordinary, all funds however privileged, must be called out to repel the enemy. The ship’s treasures must be thrown overboard to lighten her in the tempest and save her from shipwreck. Our country is sinking; . . strength, riches, life, wisdom, council, . . whatever we have is hers. The victory is ours, if we carry on to the end of our enterprise the sublime enthusiasm with which it began. The mass with which we must resist the enemy must be composed of the strength of all, and the sacrifices of all; and then what will it import that he pours upon us anew the legions which are now superfluous in Germany, or the swarm

of conscripts which he is about to drag from France? We began the contest with 80,000 men less; he began it with 200,000 more. Let him replace them if he can; let him send or bring them to this region of death, as destructive to the oppressors as to the oppressed! Adding to the experience of two campaigns the strength of despair and of fury, we will give to their phalanxes of banditti the same fate which their predecessors have experienced; and the earth, fattened with their blood, shall return to us with usury the fruits of which they have deprived us! Let the monarchs of the North, forgetful of what they are, and of what they are capable, submit to be the slaves of this new Tamerlane; let them purchase at such a price the tranquillity of a moment, till it comes to their turn to be devoured! What is this to us, who are a mighty people, and resolved to perish or to triumph? Did we ask their consent when, twenty months ago, we raised our arms against the tyrant? Did we not enter into the contest alone? Did we not carry it on for a campaign alone? . . . Nothing which is necessary for our defence is wanting. Our connexion is daily drawn closer with America, to whose assistance, as timely as it was generous, the mother country is deeply indebted, and on whose zeal and loyalty a great part of our hope is founded. The alliance which we have formed with Great Britain continues and will continue; that nation has lavished for us its blood and its treasures, and

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is entitled to our gratitude and that of future ages. Let, then, intrigue, or fear, prevail with weak governments and misled cabinets; let them, if they will, conclude treaties, illusory on the part of him who grants, and disgraceful on the part of those who accept them; let them, if they will, relinquish the common cause of civilized nations, and inhumanly abandon their allies! The Spanish people will stand alone and erect amid the ruins of the European continent. Here has been drawn, never to be sheathed, the sword of hatred against the execrable tyrant; here is raised, never to be beaten down, the standard of independence and of justice! Hasten to it, all ye in Europe who will not live under the abominable yoke; ye who will not enter into a league with iniquity; ye who are indignant at the fatal and cowardly desertion of these deluded princes, come to us! Here the valiant shall find opportunities of acquiring true honour; the wise and the virtuous shall obtain respect; the afflicted shall have an asylum. Our cause is the same; the same shall be our reward. Come! and, in despite of all the arts and all the power of this inhuman despot, we will render his star dim, and form for ourselves our own destiny!"

Two things are remarkable in this paper; the total change, or rather restoration of public feeling, which must have been effected, before a Spanish government would hold up the resistance of the Dutch to Philip as a glorious example to the Spanish people; and the want of

foresight and information in the Junta, who could not only rely upon the attachment of the colonies, but even venture to declare, that the hopes of the country rested in great measure upon them. But though the Spanish government deceived itself in looking for hope where none was to be found, and in its exaggerated opinion of its military strength, it was not mistaken in relying upon the national character, and that spirit of endurance which constituted its moral strength. Upon this it was, and upon the extent and nature of the Peninsula, that those persons who from the commencement looked on with unshaken confidence to the final expulsion of the invaders, founded their judgement. The Continent, notwithstanding its extent, fell under the yoke of France, because the spirit of the people was not such as to supply the want of magnanimity and of wisdom in their rulers: the Tyrolese were subdued notwithstanding their heroism, because, in so small a territory as the Tyrol, numbers, remorselessly employed, must necessarily overcome all resistance. But no force can be sufficient to conquer and keep in subjection a peninsula, containing about 170,000 square miles, and twelve millions of inhabitants, if the people carry resistance to the uttermost. Their armies may be defeated, their towns occupied, their fortresses taken, their villages burnt, . . . but the country cannot be conquered while the spirit of the nation remains unsubdued. In Spain the

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mountains form a chain of fastnesses running through the whole Peninsula, and connecting all its provinces with each other. In such a country, therefore, when the war ceases to be carried on by army against army, and becomes the struggle of a nation against its oppressors, pursued incessantly by night and day, the soldier, no longer acting in large bodies, loses that confidence which discipline gives him; while the peasant, on the other hand, feels the whole advantage which the love of his country, and the desire of vengeance, and the sense of duty, and the approbation of his own heart, give to the individual in a contest between man and man. The character of the Spaniards was displayed in their annals. The circumstances of their country remained the same as when Henri IV. said of it, that it was a land wherein a weak army must be beaten, and a strong one starved. They who were neither ignorant of history nor of human nature considered these things; and therefore, from the commencement of the struggle, regarded it with unabated hope.

But never since the commencement of the French revolution had the affairs of England, of Europe, and of the world, worn so dark an aspect as at this time. The defeats which the Spaniards had sustained were far more disheartening than those of the preceding winter, because they evinced that neither had the armies improved in discipline, nor the government profited by experience. It was but too plain, that,

notwithstanding the show of resistance made at the Sierra Morena, the kingdoms of Andalusia were in fact open to the enemy ; so supine was the Central Junta, as to make it even probable that Cadiz itself might be betrayed or surprised ; and if, now that Buonaparte had no other object, he should march a great force against the English in Portugal, there were few persons who had sufficient knowledge of the country and of the character of the people, to look onward without dismay.

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Lord Wellington calculated upon both. He knew that man is naturally brave, that the men of any country therefore may, with good training, be made good soldiers, and that if the Spanish troops were no longer what they had been under the Prince of Parma, the fault was not in the materials, but in the composition of their armies. The Portugeze were as proud a people as the Spaniards, and had in their history as much cause for pride ; but they were not so impracticable. The removal of their court removed all those intrigues and jealousies which would otherwise have been at work ; the nation felt itself at this time dependent upon England ; but there was no humiliation in this ; any such sentiment was precluded by old alliance, the confidence of hereditary attachment, and the consciousness that it was willing and able to do its own part in its own defence. Whatever measures the British government advanced were cordially adopted ; and Lord Wellington, during

*Lord Wel-  
lington's  
views with  
regard to  
Portugal.*

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the mortifying inaction to which he was reduced, had the satisfaction of knowing that the Portuguese troops were every day improving in military habits and feelings, and that he might reckon upon them in the next campaign as an efficient force. In all his views and opinions concerning the course to be pursued, Marquis Wellesley entirely agreed with him; and the Marquis, when he returned to England to take his place in administration, proposed that every effort should be made for placing Portugal in the best state of preparation. He knew that we might rely upon the Spaniards for perseverance through all reverses and under every disadvantage; but it was on the Portuguese that we must place our trust for regular and effectual co-operation.

*The King's  
speech.*

When parliament assembled this was referred to in the king's speech. "The efforts," it was said, "of Great Britain, for the protection of Portugal, had been powerfully aided by the confidence which the Prince Regent had reposed in his majesty, and by the co-operation of the local government, and of the people of that country. The expulsion of the French from that kingdom, and the glorious victory of Talavera, had contributed to check the progress of the enemy. The Spanish government had now, in the name and by the authority of Ferdinand VII., determined to assemble the general and extraordinary Cortes of the nation. This measure, his majesty trusted, would give fresh

animation and vigour to the councils and the arms of Spain, and successfully direct the energies and spirit of the Spanish people to the maintenance of the legitimate monarchy, and to the ultimate deliverance of their country. The most important considerations of policy and of good faith required, that as long as this great cause could be maintained with a prospect of success, it should be supported, according to the nature and circumstances of the contest, by the strenuous and continued assistance of the power and resources of Great Britain."

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In the debates which ensued it was a melancholy thing to see how strongly the spirit of opposition manifested itself even in those persons whose opinions and feelings regarding the justice and necessity of the war were in entire sympathy with the government. Earl St. Vincent inveighed in the strongest terms against the ministers, to whose ignorance and incapacity, to whose weakness, infatuation, and stupidity, he said, all our disasters and disgrace were owing. After panegyricizing Sir John Moore as one of the ablest men who ever commanded an army, he spoke of the battle of Talavera as a victory which had been purchased with the useless expenditure of our best blood, which led to no advantage, and which had had all the consequences of defeat. "It is high time," said he, "that parliament should adopt strong measures, or the voice of the country will resound like thunder in their ears. Any body may be a

*Speech of  
Earl St.  
Vincent;*

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minister now : they pop in, and they pop out, like the man and woman in a peasant's barometer ; they rise up like tadpoles ; they may be compared to wasps, to hornets, to locusts ; they send forth their pestilential breath over the whole country, and nip and destroy every fair flower in the land. The conduct of his majesty's government has led to the most frightful disasters, which are no where exceeded in the annals of history. The country is in that state which makes peace inevitable ; it will be compelled to make peace, however disadvantageous, because it will be unable to maintain a war so shamefully misconducted and so disastrous in its consequences."

*Lord Grenville ;*

Lord Grenville spake in a similar temper. The day must come, he said, when ministers would have to render an account to parliament of the treasures which they had wasted, and the lives which they had sacrificed. Their measures had uniformly failed, and presented nothing but an unbroken series of disgraceful, irremediable failures. And yet they had the confidence, the unblushing confidence, to tell us of a victory ! Gilded disasters were called splendid victories, and the cypress that droops over the tombs of our gallant defenders, whose lives have been uselessly sacrificed, was to be denominated blooming laurels ! He spake of what might have been done if an army had been sent either to Trieste or to the north of Germany ; condemned the Walcheren expedition, as the plan

and execution of that miserable enterprise deserved, and pronounced a condemnation not less unqualified upon the plans which had been pursued in Spain, where, he said, they had persisted in expecting co-operation from an armed peasantry, persevering in error after the absurdity of such an expectation had been proved. Why too had the army in that country been exposed in unhealthy situations? But the Lords had a duty to perform; having seen what had taken place before in Spain and Portugal, they could not exculpate themselves for having continued to repose confidence in such ministers. They must exert themselves in this most imminent crisis of their country. "You cannot be ignorant," said he, "of its tremendous situation, and where can you look? To the government! See it, my Lords, broken, distracted, incompetent, incapable of exerting any energy, or inspiring any confidence! It is not from the government that our deliverance is to be expected; it must be found, if it be found at all, in your own energy and in your own patriotism." And he concluded with moving as an amendment to the address, that vigorous and effectual proceedings should be instituted, as the only atonement which could be made to an injured people!

The language of the opposition in the House of Commons was not more temperate. "Lord Wellington's exploits at Talavera," said the Honourable Mr. Ward, "left the cause of Spain as desperate as they found it, and in their

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able Mr.  
Ward;



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consequences resembled not victories, but defeats. For by what more disastrous consequences could defeat have been followed, than by a precipitate retreat, by the loss of 2000 men left to the mercy of the enemy upon that spot where they had just fought and conquered, but fought and conquered in vain; that spot which, as it were in mockery to them, we had endeavoured to perpetuate in the name of the general? By what worse could it have been followed than by the loss of all footing in Spain, the ruin of another army, and the virtual renunciation of all the objects of the war? William III. used by his skilful generalship to render defeat harmless, . . . our generals made victory itself unavailing."

*Mr. Ponsonby;*

Mr. Ponsonby said it was a crisis which called upon the House of Commons to put forth its penal powers; and that had he a choice between punishment and pardon, he should prefer punishment, because the circumstances of the country imperiously required some solemn example. *Whit-* Mr. Whitbread directed the force of his invective against Marquis Wellesley. "To Spain," he said, "he had gone, after delays which ought to be accounted for; and what were his services when he got there? Why, he went through the mummery of dancing on the French flag! He visited the Junta, went through all the routine of etiquette and politics, made a speech about reform, took his glass after dinner, and religiously toasted the Pope. On his re-

turn, of course, when the places were going, he came in for his share, and made one of the administration which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had at length compiled; but in what manner had he compiled it? His first application was to two noble lords, with whose principles he had been at war all his political life: they rejected the tender in a manner worthy of their dignity, and the rebuff which they gave would have daunted any man of less temerity than himself. There was not a man, from the Orkneys to the Land's End, who did not pronounce him and his administration weak, incapable, and insufficient. Even with the addition of the two colleagues who had deserted them they were feeble, but they then stood on a principle, or rather in opposition to a principle; but now, having been rejected by all who were worthy, the weak, and old, and infirm, were collected from the hedges and high roads, and consorted with for want of better.

“Let our relative situation with the enemy,” he pursued, “be well considered! Austria gone, the French force concentrated, and Spain their only object. We are told that Portugal may be defended by 30,000 men; but would not Buonaparte know our force to a drummer? and where we had 30,000 he would have three score. Who would struggle against such fearful odds? We held our ground in that country just at the will of the French Emperor, and at his option he could drive us out of it. And

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what could we expect from our present ministry, . . or rather from a single man, for the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in fact, stood alone? Marquis Wellesley, of whom such account had been made, might be considered as completely insignificant. Who was he? The governor of India, . . the man who had scarcely escaped the censure of that house for his cruel tyranny! the man who had assailed the press, that sacred palladium of the people! the friend of despotism! the foe to liberty! Could this man say to Buonaparte, in the noble indignation of insulted virtue, ‘I have not done as you have!’ Alas! if such a man had strength, he would indeed be a fearful acquisition to such a government; but he was known, and therefore weak and harmless. Peace,” Mr. Whitbread concluded, “should be the cry of the nation. Peace, . . particularly because the thralldom of millions of our fellow-subjects was the tenure by which this incapable junto held their offices.”

*Mr. Perceval.*

Mr. Perceval replied to this speech in all its parts. “As to the situation,” he said, “which he had the honour to hold in his Majesty’s council, he must state, in the most explicit manner, that it was not an object of his own desire; on the contrary, if his wishes had been realized, another person would then have held the office of first lord of the treasury. When, by his Majesty’s directions, he had applied to Lords Grey and Grenville, for the purpose of

forming an extended administration, the first proposition which he should have made to them, if they had given him an opportunity of stating it, would have been, that it should be left to themselves to determine who should be the first lord of the treasury." This was a confession of weakness: twelve months before, Mr. Perceval was strong in the opinion of the people; but now the deplorable Walcheren expedition hung about him like a mill-stone, and, even in his own feelings, weighed him down. Having said what he could in defence of that expedition, he rose into a higher strain, when speaking of the Spaniards, and the unjust and unfeeling manner in which their conduct had been represented. "Was it liberal," he said, "that the defenders of Zaragoza and Gerona should be said to have displayed no generosity, no enthusiasm, no patriotism? Well, indeed, might those persons censure what was done to aid the Spanish cause, who could assert that the cause did not deserve success! But neither in ancient nor in modern history could an example be found of a country maintaining a contest like that which this degraded Spain, and this degraded Spanish government, had so long supported. Never, in recent times, had 250,000 Frenchmen been so long in a country without subduing it. Spain was not subdued; but what effect upon the Spaniards such language as had been used that night might produce, it was impossible to predict!"

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*Vote of  
thanks to  
Lord Wel-  
lington op-  
posed by the  
Earl of Suf-  
folk.**Earl Gros-  
venor ;**Earl Grey ;**Marquis  
Wellesley ;*

When a vote of thanks to Lord Wellington was moved in the House of Lords, it was opposed by the Earl of Suffolk, who argued that the best mode of assisting Spain was by a floating force, which might be landed wherever it could be most useful; by such a mode of warfare, he said, Gerona, during its long and glorious defence, might have been relieved. Earl Grosvenor also opposed the vote, and made some judicious remarks upon the practice of raising men to the peerage whose fortunes were not adequate to support the rank. The ends of military fame, he said, would be better promoted if different orders of military merit were established; the same spirit of valour might be excited, and all inconveniences to the consti-

tution avoided. Earl Grey denied that the battle of Talavera was a victory; it had been trumpeted as such, he said, by ministers, but in so doing they had practised an unworthy deception. Lord Wellington had betrayed want of capacity and want of skill: the consequences had been most disastrous, nor did we yet know the extent of the evil. One army had been compelled to retreat into Portugal, where he feared it was in a very critical situation, and where, from the unhealthiness of the position which it occupied, disease had made such an alarming progress among the troops, that he believed their numbers did not at that time exceed 9000 effective men.

Marquis Wellesley replied, that he knew the

circumstances which had influenced his brother in all his movements during the campaign, and the plain statement of those circumstances triumphantly vindicated him. "Against strange mismanagement," he said, "such unlooked for, such unaccountable casualties as had occurred during that campaign, and frustrated a plan so wisely contrived, no human prudence on Sir Arthur's part could provide. Concerning the necessity of a radical change in the government of Spain, his opinions," he continued, "were not unknown. But it surely was not to be expected that Spain could reach at once the vigour of a free government, just emerging as she was from that dreadful oppression which had broken down the faculties of her people, . . . from those inveterate habits and ancient prejudices which had so long contracted her views and retarded her improvement, and from the disconnexion and disunion between her different provinces. The change which was desired could not be the work of a day. But were we therefore to desert the Spaniards in this crisis of their fortunes, and abandon them to the mercy of their invaders? . . . As for the circumstances which attended and followed the battle of Talavera, nothing more perhaps, in a military sense, could be said of the result, than that the British troops had repulsed the attack of a French army almost double their numbers, the efforts of which had been chiefly directed against them. But was there no skill, no

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bravery, no perseverance displayed in the mode in which that repulse was effected? Did no glory redound from it to the British arms? Had it not been acknowledged, even by the enemy, as the severest check they had yet sustained? That victory had saved the south of Spain from absolute destruction, had afforded time for Portugal to organize her army, and had enabled Lord Wellington to take a position where he might derive supplies from Spain, at the same time that he drew nearer to his own magazines. He should not attempt to diminish the disasters which afterwards befel the Spanish armies; both his noble brother and himself had earnestly advised them to keep on the defensive; but, flushed with the victory of Talavera, and too sanguine of success, they advanced at all points, and the result had fatally justified the propriety of the advice which had been given them. This, however, was not the present subject. It was enough for him to have shown that Lord Wellington had arrested the progress of the French armies into the south of Spain, and procured a breathing time for Portugal; that country was placed in a greater degree of security than at any time since it had been menaced by France, and such essential improvements had been introduced into the Portuguese army, that it would be enabled effectually to co-operate with the British troops. These advantages were fairly to be ascribed to Lord Wellington; and he did not hesitate to say,

that his brother was as justly entitled to every distinction which his sovereign had conferred, and to every honour and reward which it was in the power of that house to bestow, as any noble lord who for his personal services had obtained the same distinctions, or who sat there by descent from his illustrious ancestors."

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To this temperate and able speech, which showed that means had been taken with due foresight, and that with due perseverance there was a well-grounded hope of success, Lord Grenville replied by arguing from the misconduct of the Spanish ministers against our own. "Let the house," he said, "consider how much dependence the administration had placed upon such a government as that of the Spaniards, and then ask themselves if they could be justified in supporting them in a continuance of error. We were now told that reliance was to be placed upon the co-operation of the Portuguese; but they ought to judge of the future from the past, to recollect that for want of co-operation it had been found necessary to retreat, and that the remnant of the army was in a situation not unlike that in which it was placed by its advance to Talavera."

*Lord Grenville.*

The vote of thanks was opposed in like manner in the House of Commons. General Tarleton said, that Lord Wellington's dispatches were vain-glorious, partial, and incorrect; that he had been deficient in information concerning the amount and situation of Soult's army; and

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*General Tarleton;*



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*Mr. Whitbread.*

that he had been compelled to a precipitate retreat, after abandoning his sick and wounded. Mr. Whitbread affirmed, that the battle had been more a repulse than a victory; nor could he, he said, withhold a tear, when he thought of the British blood which had been spilt in sacrifice to incapacity and folly. The consequence of the battle was, that the army had no other retreat than that through Deleitosa, and their condition during that retreat was such, that many hundred perished on the road from famine. The Spanish cause, he concluded, was now more hopeless than ever. But the motion received a powerful support from Mr. Windham, who, setting all party views aside, followed the feelings of his own generous nature. "The unproductive consequences of this victory," he said, . . . "for a victory it was, and a glorious victory, . . . were not to be put in comparison with the military renown which we had gained. Ten or fifteen years ago, it was thought on the continent that we might do something at sea, . . . that an Englishman was a sort of sea-animal; but our army was considered as nothing. Our achievements in Egypt first entitled us to the name of a military power; the battle of Maida confirmed it; and he would not give the battles of Vimeiro, Coruña, and Talavera, for a whole Archipelago of sugar islands."

*Pension  
voted for  
Lord Wel-  
lington.  
Feb. 16.*

The vote was carried in both houses without a division. But the opposition tried their strength in the House of Commons upon the

King's message, recommending that a pension of 2000*l.* should be settled upon Lord Wellington, and the two next heirs to his title in succession. "With the grant of the peerage," CHAP. XXVII.  
1810. Mr. Calcraft said, "that house had nothing to do; he was sorry it had been conferred; but though there was no remedy for it, the house ought not to add to it the pension. Pensions and thanks might be voted, but they could not permanently blind the country; whatever the public opinion might be now, it would not be with ministers upon this subject a month hence, when the whole fruits of Lord Wellington's victories and campaigns would develop themselves to public view. It was mournful and alarming to hear that Lord Wellington had said he could defend Portugal with 50,000 men, provided 30,000 of them were British; for if the French were in earnest in their designs upon that country, before three months Lord Wellington and his army would be in England. Neither Portugal nor any other country could be defended by victories like that of Talavera."

It was said by General Craufurd, a peerage might be an incumbrance to Lord Wellington without a pension. General Loftus also remarked, that he had always been one of the most liberal men in existence, and the state of his circumstances was therefore, he imagined, far from sufficient for the support of the dignity to which he was elevated. Sir Francis Burdett Opposed by  
Sir Francis  
Burdett; took this occasion for touching a popular note.

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“If Lord Wellington’s liberality,” he said, “had brought him into difficulty or debt, who was it whom they called upon to free him from the incumbrance?.. the people;.. who already owed debts enough, not in consequence of any prodigality of their own, but through the impositions of their representatives. As to the military part of the question, he could only say, that the result was failure, .. failure as complete as failure could be. But even if the occasion had been such as to deserve reward, he should object to making any appeal for that purpose to the people’s purse. What was become of the patronage of the government? Where were the sinecures, which were always defended because they afforded a fund for such purposes as these? Yet application was made to the people, .. and this by a government who, while they perpetually threw the burden upon the people, had greater means of rewarding merit at their disposal than all the combined merit of Europe could possibly exhaust.”

*Mr. Whitbread;*

The same strain of argument was pursued by Mr. Whitbread. “It was often argued,” he said, “that the expectation of one of those great places falling in satisfied many a claimant: if so, why should not Lord Wellington wait for one of them? It was an important part of the question, whether, supposing the peerage to have been merited, the circumstances of the new peer were such as to require the pension; for if they were not, it would be a scandalous

waste of the public money. Nor was it necessarily to follow, that whenever the king was advised to grant a peerage to any officer, the House of Commons was bound to vote him a pension."

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This produced from Mr. Wellesley Pole a statement of his brother's fortune. Mr. Wilberforce then appealed to the house, whether, if Lord Wellington had devoted the great talents which confessedly belonged to him to the bar, or to any other liberal pursuit, he would not have rendered them infinitely more productive than it appeared that he had done by actively employing them in the service of his country? and he protested against the unjust and impolitic illiberality of opposing such a grant upon such grounds. The same opinion was delivered by Mr. Canning. "The vic-

*Mr. Wil-  
berforce ;*

*Mr. Can-  
ning.*

tories of Lord Wellington," he said, "had re-established our military character, and retrieved the honour of the country, which was before in abeyance. If the system of bestowing the peerage was to be entirely changed, and the House of Lords to be peopled only by the successors to hereditary honours, Lord Wellington certainly would not be found there. But he would not do that noble body the injustice of supposing that it was a mere stagnant lake of collected honours: it was to be occasionally refreshed by fresh streams. It was the prerogative of the crown to confer the honour of the peerage; it was the duty of that house to give it honour

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and independence. The question was, whether they would enable Lord Wellington to take his seat with the proudest peer in the other house, or whether they would send him there with the avowed intention that it was only to the crown he was to look for support. It was their duty to take care if the crown made a peer, that it should not make a generation of peers wholly dependent on its favour for their support.”

*The common council  
petition  
against the  
pension.*

There was a great majority upon this question, 213 voting for the grant, 106 against it. But the current of popular opinion in the metropolis set in with the opposition at this time; for the Walcheren expedition, like a pestilential vapour, clouded the whole political horizon. The common council presented a petition against the pension: a measure so extraordinary, they said, in the present state of the country, and under all the afflicting circumstances attending our armies in Spain and Portugal under that officer's command, could not but prove highly injurious in its consequences, and no less grievous than irritating to the nation at large. In the military conduct of Lord Wellington, the lord mayor and common council added, they did not recognise any claims to national remuneration; and they conceived it to be a high aggravation of the misconduct of his majesty's unprincipled and incapable advisers, that they had, in contempt and defiance of public opinion, recommended this grant to parliament. There was neither

reason nor justice in making it, and therefore they prayed that it might not pass into a law. When the second reading was moved, Mr. Whitbread said he trusted that as this petition had been presented, the minister would not press it that day. Mr. Perceval replied he saw no necessity for any such forbearance, and the bill passed by a great majority, 106 dividing against 36.

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In these debates ministers were completely triumphant. Some of their opponents accused them of having done too much, others of having done too little, and some would fain have persuaded the people of Great Britain, that our army had obtained no victory at Talavera. The charge of having taken no measures for conciliating the Spaniards, by obtaining for them a restoration of those political rights which had been so long withheld, was abundantly disproved by the papers laid before parliament. There it appeared that Mr. Stuart, Mr. Frere, and Marquis Wellesley, had each pressed upon the existing government the necessity of convoking the Cortes. The great error which the ministry had committed, was in their neglect of Catalonia. In the commencement of the struggle this fault was not imputable to them, but to the general, who disobeyed his instructions to convey his army to that most important scene of operations: the effects of that fatal error were to a certain extent irremediable; but no subsequent attempt was made,

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and the French were suffered to take fortress after fortress, without an effort on our part to relieve them. Still the conduct of administration toward Spain was far more worthy of commendation than of censure ; if not without error, if not always successful, it had uniformly been brave and generous : we had every motive of policy for assisting the Spaniards in their struggle, but the assistance was given in a manner worthy of the nation which gave, and of the noble people who received it.

The result of any discussion upon this subject was anticipated by the public ; they, in spite of the efforts of factious news-writers, and journalists of higher pretensions, whose want of feeling was more disgraceful even than their want of foresight, continued to feel concerning Spain like freemen and like Englishmen. Nor was Mr. Windham the only member of opposition who expressed this sentiment. When in the course of the session the Marquis of Lansdown moved for a vote of censure upon ministers for rashness and ignorance, the strong bias of party spirit did not prevent him from rendering justice, in some respects, both to his own countrymen and to Spain. “ Whatever he might think of the policy which led to the battle of Talavera,” he said, “ or of its consequences, he should ever contemplate the action itself as a proud monument of glory to the general who commanded, and to the army who won that ever-memorable day. No success, he affirmed,

*Marquis of  
Lansdown ;*

*June 8.*

could be expected in Spain under such a government, or with armies so constituted and commanded as the Spanish armies, or where supplies could not be procured; these things ought to have been known; but these things were no reflection on the Spanish national character. The Spaniards had displayed acts of the most splendid heroism which had ever been recorded; they had converted the walls of Zaragoza and Gerona into fortifications almost impregnable. Their disasters were imputable, not to the people, but to those who could suppose that a junta of persons put together in any manner composed a government, and that a crowd of men collected in any way was an army. Still he was ready to confide in the Spanish people, and to believe that much might yet be done by their efforts; and he cherished the hope, and would cherish it to the last, that if ever Europe was saved, our own country would be an important agent in that great event. But it was not by co-operating in rash expeditions with such armies as that of Cuesta."

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Lord Holland spoke to the same purport, while the intent of his speech was to fix a censure on the ministers. He condemned them for having sent out Mr. Stuart and Mr. Frere without adequate instructions, particularly with regard to the most important point, the arrangement of a system for redressing the grievances of the Spanish people and restoring their rights. But on that point the British government was

*Lord Hol-  
land;*



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fully justified. He condemned them also for neither having sent an adequate force, nor given proper instructions, nor made adequate provision for that force which they did send: but the event had shown, that a larger force had been sent than could be provided, in the inexperienced state of our own commissariat, and in the disordered state of Spain. He said that ministers ought equally to be condemned by those who disapproved of our interposing at all in the affairs of Spain, and by those who were most interested in the success of the Spaniards: if, indeed, there was any difference, the friends of Spain must condemn them most, because they were peculiarly mortified by the disappointment of their wishes, a disappointment which the misjudging policy of these ministers had produced. He was one who had felt this mortification, for no event had ever excited a livelier interest in his mind, not even the dawn of the French revolution. But having thus spoken to justify the vote of censure which he was about to give, Lord Holland argued in defence of the principle which his own party vehemently and even virulently opposed. He dwelt upon the importance of supporting Spain to the utmost, and upon the perilous facilities which Cadiz and Lisbon would afford for the invasion of Ireland, if those ports were suffered to fall into the hands of the French. If, after all efforts, he said, Spain should ultimately be subdued, his advice was, that we should promote the establishment of such a sys-

tem of government in the Spanish colonies as good statesmen could approve, the only system which ought to be approved in any country, a system founded upon the opinions and wishes of the people.

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Marquis Wellesley replied to the general attack which was made upon ministers, in a manner worthy of his reputation as a statesman. He pointed out the solid advantages which had been gained during the last campaign, by securing Portugal, and giving time for the Portuguese to form an army, which was now in a state to co-operate with the British troops; he showed also what advantages had been gained to the Spaniards, had the Junta known how to profit by them, or followed the advice which both he himself and Lord Wellington had pressed upon them in vain. Then, in a clear and masterly manner, he enforced the duty and necessity of supporting the cause of Spain. "Justly," he said, "had it been stated by the noble Marquis, that if ever Europe was to be delivered, England must be the great agent in her deliverance; and justly he might have added, that the fairest opportunity for effecting that deliverance opened, when Spain magnanimously rose to resist the most flagrant usurpation of which history records an example. Not only were we called upon by the splendour, the glory, the majesty of the Spanish cause, to lend our aid; a principle of self-preservation called upon us also: these efforts on the part of Spain afforded

*Marquis  
Wellesley.*

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us the best chance of providing for our own security, by keeping out of the hands of France the naval means of Spain, which Buonaparte was so eager to grasp, knowing they were the most effectual weapons he could wield against the prosperity and the power of Great Britain. The views of Buonaparte, in his endeavours to subjugate Spain, were obvious, even to superficial observers. The old government had placed at his disposal the resources of that country, but the old government was feeble and effete; and, however subservient to his will, he knew it was an instrument which he could not pitch to the tone of his designs. He therefore resolved to seize upon the whole Peninsula, and to establish in it a government of his own. He may have been prompted to this partly by his hatred to the Bourbon race, partly by the cravings of an insatiable ambition, partly by the vain desire of spreading his dynasty over Europe, partly by mere vanity: but his main object was, that he might wield with new vigour the naval and colonial resources of Spain, to the detriment of Great Britain. This alone could suit the vastness of his designs; this alone could promise to gratify his mortal hatred of the British name. By the entire subjugation of the Peninsula, and the full possession of its resources, he knew that he should be best enabled to sap the fundamental security of these kingdoms. Therefore how highly important was it to keep alive there a spirit of resistance to France! There were no

means, however unprincipled, which Buonaparte would scruple to employ for the attainment of his ends. To him force and fraud were alike, . . . force, that would stoop to all the base artifices of fraud, . . . fraud, that would come armed with all the fierce violence of force. Every thing which the head of such a man could contrive, or the arm execute, would be combined and concentrated into one vast effort, and that effort would be strained for the humiliation and destruction of this country. Universal dominion is, and will continue to be, the aim of all French governments; but it is pre-eminently the object to which such a mind as Buonaparte's will aspire. England alone stands in the way of the accomplishment of that design, and England he has therefore resolved to strike down and extirpate. How then were these daring projects to be met? How, but by cherishing, wherever it may be found, but particularly in the Peninsula, the spirit of resistance to the usurpations of France? If we have saved the navy of Portugal; if we have saved the Spanish ships at Ferrol; if we have enabled the Portuguese government to migrate to their colonies; if we have succeeded in yet securing the naval and colonial resources both of Portugal and Spain; how have these important objects been achieved, but by fomenting in both these kingdoms a spirit of resistance to the overwhelming ambition of Buonaparte? To this end must all our efforts be now directed. This is the only

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engine which now remains for us to work in opposition to Buonaparte's gigantic designs. Why then should we depart from that salutary line of policy? what is there to dissuade or discourage us from adhering to it? I can discover nothing in the aspect of Spanish affairs that wears any thing like the hue and complexion of despair. If, indeed, it had appeared that this spirit began to languish in the breast of the Spaniards, if miscarriages, disasters, and defeats had been observed to damp the ardour and break down the energies of the Spanish mind, then might it be believed that further assistance to the Spanish cause would prove unavailing. But, fortunately for this country, not only is there life still in Spain, but her patriotic heart still continues to beat high: the generous and exalted sentiment, which first prompted us to lend our aid to the cause of Spain, should therefore be still maintained in full force, and should still inspire us to continue that aid to the last moment of her resistance. The struggle in which Spain is now engaged is not merely a Spanish struggle. In that struggle are committed the best, the very vital interests of England. With the fate of Spain the fate of England is now inseparably blended. Should we not therefore stand by her to the last? For my part, my lords, as an adviser of the crown, I shall not cease to recommend to my sovereign to continue to assist Spain to the latest moment of her resistance. It should not dishearten us that Spain

appears to be in the very crisis of her fate ; we should, on the contrary, extend a more anxious care over her at a moment so critical. For in nations, and above all in Spain, how often have the apparent symptoms of dissolution been the presages of new life, and of renovated vigour ? Therefore, I would cling to Spain in her last struggle ; therefore, I would watch her last agonies, I would wash and heal her wounds, I would receive her parting breath, I would catch and cherish the last vital spark of her expiring patriotism. Nor let this be deemed a mere office of pious charity ; nor an exaggerated representation of my feelings ; nor an overcharged picture of the circumstances that call them forth. In the cause of Spain, the cause of honour and of interest is equally involved and inseparably allied. It is a cause in favour of which the finest feelings of the heart unite with the soundest dictates of the understanding."

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Full use was made of these debates by the French government, which was at this time employing every artifice for making the people believe that Great Britain was on the brink of ruin. The King's speech, as usual, was falsified, and sent abroad. There it was said, that whatever temporary and partial inconveniences might have resulted from the measures which were directed by France against our trade and revenue, the great source of our prosperity and strength, those measures had wholly failed of producing any general effect. The official French paper

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substituted for these words a sentence, in which the King was made to tell his parliament, they must be aware that the measures adopted by France to dry up the great sources of our prosperity had been to a certain degree efficient. It was said that we were not merely on the verge of national bankruptcy, but actually suffering under all the horrors of famine ; that our crops of every kind had failed ; we were obliged to feed our cattle with sugar and molasses, and had nothing but sugar, cocoa, and coffee, and the skin and bones of these cattle for ourselves. To a certain degree, Buonaparte and his journalists may have perhaps believed the falsehoods which they circulated ; they read in our factious newspapers of decaying trade, diminished resources, and starving manufacturers ; and the opposition told them, that France was certain of success in whatever she attempted on the Continent ; that the cause of Spain was hopeless ; that it was impossible for us to carry on the war ; that if we did not grant the Roman Catholics all that they demanded, Ireland would be lost, and the loss of Ireland would draw after it the downfall of the British empire. Speeches of this tenour were carefully translated for the use of the Emperor's subjects, and circulated throughout the Continent : but when the French saw it asserted, upon the authority of English members of parliament, that the Spaniards and Portugeze had nothing worth fighting for ; that they were inimical in their hearts to England ; that Bu-

naparte was reforming the abuses of their old government, and redressing their grievances ; when they saw it affirmed in the English House of Commons, that the people of Spain must know Marquis Wellesley would, if opportunity should offer, take both Spain and Portugal as Buonaparte had done ; when they saw the same persons who represented Sir John Moore as a consummate general vilify the talents of Lord Wellington, deny his merits, oppose the rewards which were so justly conferred on him, and maintain, in the face of their insulted country, that the British army had gained no victory at Talavera ; it appeared to them impossible that language, at once so false, so absurd, and so co-operative with the designs of France, could have been uttered by an English tongue ; such speeches were supposed to have been invented in France, and they attributed to the artifices of their own government what were in reality the genuine effusions of perverse minds, irritable tempers, and disappointed faction.

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## CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE FRENCH ENTER ANDALUSIA. DISSOLUTION  
OF THE CENTRAL JUNTA AND APPOINTMENT  
OF A REGENCY. ALBURQUERQUE'S RETREAT.

1810. *Supineness of the Central Junta.* THE Central Junta manifested none of that energy after the rout at Ocaña which they had so successfully exerted after the battle of Medellin. The whole extent, not of the loss alone, but of the danger also, had then been fairly stated, and bravely regarded. The danger was more immediate now ; so imminent indeed, that it was scarcely possible they should have deceived themselves with any expectation of seeing it averted ; but they did not venture to proclaim the whole truth, and call forth in the southern provinces a spirit like that which the Catalans displayed, and which might have made their cities and strong places emulate Zaragoza and Gerona. Instead of this, they suffered a fallacious hope to be held out, that if the enemy should enter the kingdoms of the south, the passes would be occupied behind them ; the Dukes of Parque and Alburquerque would hasten to the scene of action, and another day like that of Baylen might be expected. Fuller accounts were given in the official gazette of an affair of guerillas than of the battle of Ocaña ;

and details were published of their victory at Tamames, after the army by which it was gained had been routed at Alba de Tormes.

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They obtained a few addresses thanking them for having convoked the Cortes, which, it was said, would like an elixir of life revivify the social body to its very extremities, and congratulating them upon their triumph over internal divisions, and over those who would hastily and inopportunately have established a regency. But their enemies were more active than their friends, or rather than their dependants, for other friends they had none; and their congratulations were as premature as their triumph was short-lived. Romana's declaration against them was not the only symptom that they had lost the confidence of the army as well as of the people. The Conde de Noroña being at this time removed from the command in Galicia, addressed a proclamation to the Galicians, telling them the country was in danger, and that for his part he had given up all dependence upon the existing government. His repeated applications for money and arms had never obtained the slightest notice, and seemed rather to have given offence. Under such circumstances it remained for them to act for themselves, and he advised them to form a separate Junta for their own kingdom, and be governed by it. A similar disposition prevailed in many of the provinces, and Spain seemed on the point of relapsing into that state from which the formation of the Central Junta had delivered

*General  
discontent.*

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*Romana re-  
fuses the  
command.*

it. They were saved from it only by the progress of the enemy.

So effectually were the Junta humbled, that they requested Romana would repair to Carolina, where the wreck of Areizaga's army was collecting, and offered him full powers for whatever measures he might think necessary. But Romana was too much disgusted with the government to serve under them, and saw the consequences too clearly to place himself in a responsible situation where failure was certain. They then recalled Blake from Catalonia, where ill fortune had made him unpopular, appointing O'Donnell, in whom the soldiers and the people had great confidence, to succeed him ; but this removal could not be effected in time ; Castaños was not called upon, perhaps from a sense of the injustice with which he had been treated ; and Areizaga was thus left in the command, neither to the satisfaction of the troops, the people, or himself, for he had now a full consciousness of his weakness, his danger, and his incapacity.

*Montijo  
and D. Fr.  
Palafox  
imprisoned.*

The government for its own safety had found it necessary to imprison Montijo and D. Francisco Palafox, and they had removed the most formidable person for popular talents in the Seville Junta, by sending Padre Gil on a mission to Sicily. That Junta, however, was busily at work, though the better members took no part in its intrigues ; and the efforts which should have been made for organizing a civic and national resistance, the spirit and disposition for

which were not wanting, were employed in exciting resentment against the government. This temper was not mitigated by some financial measures, which were of a nature rather to betray its weakness than show its resources. Half the plate and jewels of every family and individual was called for, as a forced loan; and a heavy tax, in the form of a license, imposed upon every one who kept a carriage of any kind, the license being granted to those only whose profession or whose infirmities rendered it necessary. All funds which had been bequeathed or appropriated to pious purposes were for the present to be taken for war expenses, those of hospitals and public schools alone excepted; vacant *encomiendas* and vacancies in the military orders were not to be filled up, that the revenues might be made available for the same emergency; and a scale was formed for reducing the pay of all persons in the public service, soldiers who were actually employed alone excepted. These measures, which disappointed some in their expectations, and bore heavily upon the scanty means of others, produced more discontent than relief.

The Junta could at this time have had no reasonable hope of preventing the French from entering Andalusia. They could have no reliance upon the remains of Areizaga's army, for the most mournful circumstances attending such battles as that of Ocaña is, that the worst men escape, and that the best and steadiest are

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*Attempts to  
excite a  
false con-  
fidence.*

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those who fall. Parque's force was not so completely broken up; it had lost more in reputation than in actual strength, but its strength was comparatively small, and it was at a distance. What reliance they had was upon Alburquerque's corps, which consisted of only 12,000 men;... his head-quarters were at Don Benito, having 2000 men at Truxillo, and some advanced parties upon the Tagus. But their immediate danger was not from the side of Extremadura, and what was such a corps against the armies which the French would now bring into the field! Fallacious statements were circulated to make the Andalusians rely upon the strength of the passes, and the measures which had been taken for defending them. It was affirmed that Areizaga had been joined by considerable reinforcements, and abundantly supplied with means of every kind; that his army had been re-organized; that that general, who had gained the confidence of the nation, would soon be at the head of its four divisions; and that the works in the passes were such, that all the force which Napoleon might send against them would be unable to effect their way.

*Schemes of  
Count Tillg.*

Such statements, which could only deceive the people into a false security, may very possibly have been designed for that effect by some of those agents of the government, who were now looking to obtain favour with the Intruder. The members of the Junta themselves

stand clearly acquitted of any such intention. One of them, and only one, had at this time his own projects in view, and they were not so much those of a traitor, as of a desperate adventurer, in the delirium of revolutionary ambition. This was the Conde de Tilly, a man equally destitute of principle and of character, and who, as sometimes happens in the crooked paths of political expediency, had been promoted from the provincial to the Central Junta, because such promotion was the readiest means of removing him from a situation which he disgraced! This man, being destitute of any private worth and of all national feeling, could have no hope for his country; and finding no farther hope there for himself, he had turned his thoughts toward the colonies. His plan was to get four or five thousand troops at his disposal, and when the crisis which he foresaw should arrive, seize what money there might be in the treasury, hasten to Cadiz, take possession of the ships there, sail for Mexico, and there establish himself at the head of an independent government. The difficulties which he might find from the British squadron at his outset, or the Mexicans on his arrival, were overlooked in this frantic scheme. A few days before the battle of Ocaña he opened it to a general officer, whom he wished to engage in the project; that officer informed Castaños, who was then residing at Algeziras, and to whom those persons who saw that some change

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*The Junta  
announces  
their inten-  
tion to re-  
move.*

in the executive government must soon take place, were looking as one in whom the nation might confide. The adventurer was arrested in consequence, and died not long afterwards a prisoner in one of the castles at Cadiz.

At the commencement of Areizaga's unhappy operations, the Junta and the general had encouraged each other in a delusion so unreasonable that it might almost be called insane. But now if it had been possible for the government, after the experience of Somosierra, to deceive itself concerning the strength of the passes, and the reliance which might be placed upon them, their commander would have awakened them from that dream. Areizaga had lost his presumption at Ocaña, and was prepared for defeat before he was attacked. He made known his utter hopelessness to the Junta, and by sending away great part of his stores, for the purpose of securing them, betrayed it also to the army and to the people. In their former danger, after the battle of Medellin, the Junta had declared that they would never change their place of residence till some peril or public reason rendered their removal necessary ; that in such case of emergency they would make their intention known, would remove to the situation where they could with most advantage attend to the defence of the country, and would never abandon the continent of Spain while there was one spot in it which they could maintain against the

invaders. It was debated now whether they should act in conformity to this declaration. The intention of such a removal had been indicated when the Isle of Leon was named as the place where the Cortes were to assemble ; and there were some members who objected to an earlier removal, on the ground that it would greatly increase the general alarm. But the majority rightly perceived that the danger was close at hand, and therefore that no time was to be lost. They did not, however, venture openly to state the true and obvious motives for this resolution when they announced it to the public. The Isle of Leon, they said, was the fittest place for the Cortes to hold its sittings, because there were buildings there applicable to the purpose ; from thence their decrees could be communicated to every part of the Peninsula, whatever might be the vicissitudes of war ; and there they might devote themselves to their arduous functions with perfect tranquillity, which was hardly attainable amid the distractions of a great city. But this having been determined, the Junta found itself in the predicament provided for by a decree of the preceding year, wherein it had been declared, that at whatever place the representatives of the nation should be convoked, to that place the government must remove its seat. They gave notice, therefore, that on the first of February they should meet in the Isle of Leon ;

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*Murmurs  
at Seville.*

and they made immediate preparations for the removal.

The people of Seville could not but perceive that their city was to be abandoned to the enemy; this was obvious. What other designs the members of the Junta might have formed, every one guessed; according as he suspected or despised this unfortunate administration. Some said they were sold to the French, and the Junta were only pretending to fly, that they might deceive other provinces with a show of patriotism, and sell them as they had sold Andalusia. Others acquitted them of treason, to fix upon them the charge of peculation: a few of the members, they said, were, for their known virtue and talents, entitled to the love of their countrymen; the rest were a sordid race, who, having appropriated to themselves the free gifts which had been contributed for the use of the army, while they left the soldiers to perish for want of food and clothing, were now about to fly to England or to the Canaries, and there enjoy in safety the riches of which they had defrauded their brethren and their country. Those persons who could command the means of removal hastened to secure themselves in the sea-ports; others, whose fortunes rooted them to the spot, and who were thus compelled to share its fate, or whose bolder spirits were impatient of flight or of submission, joined in imprecations upon the government

by which they believed themselves to have been sacrificed; . . . whether the cause had been guilt or imbecility, the effect to them and to the country was the same.

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The preparations of the French having now been completed, the Intruder put himself at the head of the French army, and advanced to take possession of the kingdoms of Andalusia. The actual command was vested in Marshal Soult, having Victor, Mortier, and Sebastiani under him. The Intruder was accompanied by Azanza, O'Farrell, and other of his ministers, who, believing that Spain was now conquered, and that Great Britain must withdraw from a contest which it was impossible she could maintain, were confirmed in that opinion\* by the speeches of the opposition in the British parliament, and by the authority of certain English newspapers. The French, to exaggerate their easy triumph, affirmed that the Spanish general, confiding in the entrenchments which he had thrown up at the entrance of the defile, in the cuts which had been made in the roads, and the mines which had been dug at the brink of the precipices, considered his position impregnable. But Areizaga had not been more censurable at Ocaña for rashness than he was now for the total want of that confidence with which he was thus reproached. Had he known how to have excited in his men either the hope or the despair

*Invasion of  
Andalusia.*

\* Memoria de Azanza y O'Farrell, § 193, pp. 169, 170. They plead this in justification or excuse for themselves.

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of enthusiastic devotion to their country and their cause, the strength of the position would have afforded him such advantages, that the enemy must have sought some other entrance into Andalusia. There was no attempt at this; the remembrance of his former defeat acted both upon him and his soldiers, and the Sierra Morena was defended no better than the Somosierra had been. The men gave way at every point, with scarcely a show of resistance, because they saw, by the conduct of their general, that it was not expected they should stand their ground. One division took flight at Navas de Tolosa, where one of the most celebrated victories in Spanish history had been gained over the Moors. The operations began on the 20th of January, and the Intruder's head-quarters were established the next day at Baylen, a name of which the French reminded the Spaniards now with bitter exultation.

*False hopes  
held out to  
the people  
by the Cen-  
tral Junta.*

On the same day, the Junta informed the people of Seville that the pass of Almaden had been forced; but the danger, they said, was not so great as terror might perhaps represent it. The division stationed there, having been far too weak for maintaining the post, was gone to join Alburquerque, who threatened the flank of the enemy; the Duke del Parque was advancing by rapid marches; their junction would form an army superior to the French force at Almaden, which would thus be checked in its career, or driven back; while Areizaga's army occupied

the other passes, and was ready to hasten to the defence of Seville, whither also the two dukes would repair in case of necessity. This, they said, was the true state of things, which the government had neither exaggerated nor dissembled. They had issued orders for marching off all the men in arms who could be collected to join the armies, and for supplying them ; and they called upon the people of this capital to lay aside all terror, to suffer no confusion or tumult, but to display the same courage and calmness which they had so honourably manifested in times of greater danger. For the French, they said, depended more upon the distrust and disunion which they hoped to create than upon their own strength.

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While the Junta thus admonished the people to be calm, they themselves were bewildered by the danger which pressed upon them. The series of their instructions to Alburquerque, from the time when they first clearly saw that Andalusia was seriously threatened, exhibits their incapacity and their wavering councils in the most extraordinary manner. A month before the attack was made, Alburquerque warned them that the pass of Almaden was threatened, and explaining in what manner such a movement on the part of the enemy would threaten his own position, observed how expedient it was to call his troops from Truxillo and the advanced posts upon the Tagus. Their answer was, that if the enemy made the movement which he apprehended,

*Instructions to  
Albur-  
querque.*

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he must endeavour to prevent them, by taking a good position, where he might fight them to advantage ; meantime the force at Truxillo must not be lessened, and he must not forget to leave a competent garrison in Badajoz. By another dispatch they enjoined him to act offensively and with energy, to destroy the plans of the French for penetrating by the road of La Plata. Another ordered him to hold himself ready for marching as soon as he should receive instructions ; and had he been a man of less decision, it would thus have suspended his movements till those instructions arrived. His army was thus upon the Guadiana when the passes were forced, and the enemy moved a column along the road of La Plata, to occupy Guadalcanal, and thus prevent him from entering Andalusia. This purpose Alburquerque understood, and made his own movements so judiciously, that when they expected to take easy possession of Guadalcanal, they found him there with the main body of his infantry, while the horse escorted his artillery to St. Olalla and Ronquillo ; and thus the whole army was ready to move wherever its services were required. Here he received those instructions for which he had been too zealous and too good an officer to wait. They directed him to approach the enemy as near as possible, to oppose them if they attempted to enter Andalusia, and if they should retreat upon La Mancha, to harass them as much as possible ; for it appears that the Junta even indulged this hope. Albur-

querque informed them, that an army, consisting of 8000 disposable men and 600 horse, could not approach very near to watch the movements of a hostile force, more than three-fold its own number; if he added to his own little division that which was destined to garrison Badajoz, which had at this time scarcely 400 effective men, it would only increase his own troops to 11,700, which would still be insufficient either to occupy the line of defence, which they instructed him to take up, or to observe the enemy with any hope of impeding them: nevertheless he would do all that was possible. On the 21st the Junta ordered him to march immediately for Cordoba, in consequence of the enemy's having occupied the pass called Puerto del Rey; the next morning they summoned him to Seville, by the shortest route, and with the utmost expedition; before night they changed their purpose, and sent off another express, ordering him to Cordoba. This vacillation was imputed to treason, especially as the war-minister, D. Antonio Cornel, had long been suspected by the people. Certain it is, that if Alburquerque had obeyed these orders, his own army must have been cut off, and Cadiz would inevitably have been taken by the enemy, according to their aim and expectation: but the error of the Junta is sufficiently accounted for by their incapacity and their alarm.

The termination of their power was at hand. When this last order was expedited to Albur-

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*Manifiesto  
del Duque  
de Albur-  
querque,  
45-70.*

*Insurrec-  
tion at Se-  
ville against  
the Central  
Junta.*

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querque, every hour brought fresh tidings of the progress of the enemy, the murmurs of the people becoming louder as their agitation increased, and their danger appeared more imminent. The Junta were hastening their departure for Cadiz ; their equipages were conveyed to the quays, and the papers from the public offices were embarked on the Guadalquiver. This alone would have made the populace apprehend the real state of things, even if it had been possible to keep them in ignorance of the disasters which so many breathless couriers announced. During the nights of the 22d and 23d the patrols were doubled ; no disturbance, however, took place ; the agents of Montijo and Francisco Palafox were preparing to strike an effectual blow, and carefully prevented a premature explosion. On the morning of the 24th the people assembled in the square of St. Francisco, and in front of the Alcazar ; some demanded that the Central Junta should be deposed ; others, more violent in their rage, cried out, that they should be put to death ; but the universal cry was, that the city should be defended ; and they took arms tumultuously, forbade all persons to leave the city, and patrolled the streets in numerous small parties to see that this prohibition was observed. The tumult began at eight in the morning, and in the course of two hours became general : they who secretly directed it, cried out that the Junta of Seville should assume the government, went to the Carthusian con-

vent in which Montijo and Francisco Palafox were confined, delivered them, and by acclamation called on Saavedra to take upon himself the direction of public affairs in this emergency.

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D. Francisco Saavedra, at that time minister of finance and president of the Junta of Seville, was a man of great ability and high character; but he was advanced in years, and it was believed that poison had been administered to him, at the instigation of Godoy, which had in some degree affected his intellects. Whatever foundation there may have been for this belief, he betrayed no want either of intellect or of exertion on this occasion; he calmed the people by consenting to exercise the authority with which they invested him; assembled the members of the provincial Junta; issued a proclamation enjoining the Sevillians to remain tranquil; and by making new appointments, and dispatching new orders to the armies, satisfied the populace for the time. Montijo left the city to assist in collecting the scattered troops; and Romana was re-nominated to that army from which the Central Junta had removed him. The people, however, called upon Romana to take upon himself the defence of the city, and stopped his horses at the gate; but Romana evaded the multitude, and hastened towards Badajoz to secure that important fortress, as the best service which he could then perform.

*Saavedra  
takes upon  
himself the  
temporary  
authority.*

Every thing was in confusion now. The Central Junta were hastening how they could

*The French  
enter Se-  
ville.*



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Jovellanos,  
p. 13. § 6.

*They over-  
run Anda-  
lusia.*

to Cadiz. Saavedra with five other members of the Seville Junta took the same course, separating themselves from their unworthy colleagues, some of whom, they now perceived, were corrupted by the enemy, and others betrayed by their selfishness and their fears. These persons remained to receive their reward from the intrusive government, or make their terms with it; and Seville, in spite of the disposition of its inhabitants, received the yoke like Madrid. This had been foreseen, and the Central Junta had been urged to break up the cannon foundry, and destroy the stores which they could not remove; but every thing was left to the French. The virtue indeed which had been displayed at Zaragoza and Gerona appeared the more remarkable when it was seen how ignobly the Andalusian cities submitted to the invaders, who sent off their detachments in all directions, not so much to conquer the country, as to take possession of it. Jaen, which had boasted of its preparations for defence, where six-and-forty pieces of cannon had been mounted, and military stores laid in to resist a siege, submitted as tamely as the most defenceless village. Granada, also, where a crusade had been preached, was entered without resistance by Sebastiani. The people of Alhama were the first who opposed the enemy; their town, which had only the ruins of Moorish works to protect it, was carried by storm; and Sebastiani fought his way from Antequera to Malaga through armed

citizens and peasantry, headed by priests and monks. The French say that this insurrection, as they called it, put on an alarming appearance; and it is evident, from the struggle made in this quarter by a hasty and undisciplined multitude, that if the provincial authorities had displayed common prudence in preparing for the invasion, and common spirit in resisting it, Andalusia might have proved the grave of the invaders. While Sebastiani thus overran Granada, Mortier was detached on the other hand to occupy Extremadura, which it was thought was left exposed by the retreat of the English; but Alburquerque, disobeying the express commands of the government, had garrisoned Badajoz, Romana had repaired in time to that fortress, and the designs and expectations of the enemy in that important quarter were effectually baffled.

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This was not their only disappointment. The possession of the country, and all the open towns, was of little importance when compared with that of Cadiz. If it were possible that the fate of Spain could depend upon any single event, that event would have been the capture of Cadiz at this time; and the French therefore pushed on for it with even more than their accustomed rapidity. The city was utterly unprepared for an attack: there were not a thousand troops in the Isle of Leon, and not volunteers enough to man the works; the battery of St. Fernando, one of its main bulwarks of de-

*The French  
push for  
Cadiz.*

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fence, was unfinished. While the scene of action was at a distance, the people of Cadiz thought the danger was remote also; and but for the genius and decision of a single man, Buonaparte might have executed his threat of taking vengeance there for the loss of his squadron.

*Albur-  
querque's  
movements.*

At four on the morning of the 24th Alburquerque received that dispatch from the Central Junta, which, countermanding his march to Seville, ordered him to make for Cordoba. A counter-order of some kind he seems to have expected; for, in acknowledging this dispatch, he expressed his satisfaction that he had not commenced his movements according to the instructions received the preceding night, in which case he must have had the inconvenience of a counter-march; at the same time he said, that the troops which he had directed to garrison Badajoz, and which he was now ordered to recall, could not join him without great danger, and without leaving that place defenceless, . . a point of such importance, that though these orders were positive, he would not obey them unless they were repeated. At this time he was at Pedroso de la Sierra, whither he had advanced from Guadalcanal, pursuant to the first instructions, requiring him to move upon Cordoba. There was the Guadalquivir to cross, and Alburquerque, not being certain that his artillery could pass the bridge of Triana, determined to have it ferried over at Cantillana. He

was near that ferry when the last dispatches reached him, written on the 23d, and repeating the order to march towards Cordoba: but Alburquerque at this time knew that the Junta were flying from Seville, though they had given him no intimation of their design, and knew also that Cordoba must then be in the enemy's possession. He did not therefore hesitate for a moment to disobey orders, which must have led to the destruction of his army, . . an army, in the fate of which, inconsiderable as it was, the fate of Spain was more essentially involved, than in that of any which she had yet sent into the field. Having crossed at Cantillana, he made the main body proceed to Carmona, while he himself, with part of his little cavalry, advanced towards Ecija, where the French had already arrived, to ascertain their movements, and if possible alarm them by his own, and make them suppose that his army covered Seville: but the French general, as well as Alburquerque, was aware that Seville was a point of far inferior importance to that upon which the invaders had fixed their attention; and the enemy were now pushing on the chief part of their force by El Arahal and Moron to Utrera, in order to cut off the Duke from Cadiz. The least delay or indecision, from the moment he began his march, would have proved fatal. Instantly perceiving their object, he ordered his troops to make for Utrera, where his artillery and cavalry arrived almost at the same time

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pointed go-  
vernors of  
Cadix by  
the people.*

with the French ; from thence he marched with the infantry by Las Cabezas to Lebrija, across the marsh, at a season when it was deemed impracticable ; thus enabling it to reach Xerez in time, while the cavalry accompanied the artillery along the high road, skirmishing as it retreated, delaying the pursuers, and sacrificing itself for the preservation of the rest of the army and of Cadiz. On the night of the 30th he performed this march from Utrera to Lebrija ; and on the same night the people of Cadiz were relieved by an express from him, saying, that he was between them and the French, and should reach the city in time to save it. The following morning he arrived at Xerez, having gained a day's march upon the enemy : they found themselves outstript in rapidity, and outmanœuvred ; and on the morning of the 2d of February, Alburquerque, with his 8000 men, entered the Isle of Leon, having accomplished a march of sixty-five leagues, 260 English miles. Thus Cadiz was saved.

Yet the means of defence had been so scandalously neglected, that the Isle of Leon must have been lost if the French had ventured to make a spirited attack upon it ; and Cadiz would then speedily have shared the same fate. In general, the French calculate with sufficient confidence upon the errors of their enemies, . . a confidence which has rarely deceived them in the field, and has almost invariably succeeded in negotiation. Here, however, they did not

think it possible that works so essential to the salvation of the government should have been left unfinished ; and, knowing that the troops were under a man whom they trusted and loved, they knew that, naked, and exhausted, and half-starved as those troops were, behind walls and ramparts, they would prove desperate opponents. Having saved this all-important place by his presence, the Duke lost no time in securing it ; he exerted himself night and day : the people, he says, when they are guided by their first feelings, usually see things as they are ; they blessed him as their preserver, and he was appointed governor by acclamation.

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While Alburquerque was on his march, a change in the government had been effected. Venegas had been appointed governor of Cadiz by the Central Junta, apparently in reward for that blind obedience to their instructions, which, more than any other circumstance, frustrated Sir Arthur Wellesley's victory. Both Mr. Frere and the British general distrusted his military talents. The people of Cadiz, with less justice, suspected his fidelity, and he was not without fear that he might become the victim of suspicion in some fit of popular fury. His danger became greater as soon as it was known that the Central Junta had been deposed at Seville, and were flying in various directions ; but Venegas, with prudent foresight, went to the Cabildo, and, saying that the government from which he had received his appointment existed no longer,

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elected at  
Cadiz.*

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resigned his command into their hands, and offered to perform any duty to which they should appoint him. This well-timed submission had all the effect which he could wish; the Cabildo were flattered by it, the more, because such deference of the military to the civil authority was altogether unprecedented in that country; and they requested him to continue in his post, and act as their president, till a Junta could be elected for the government of the town. Measures were immediately taken for choosing this Junta, and the election was made in the fairest manner. A balloting-box was carried from house to house; the head of every family voted for an electoral body; and this body, consisting of about threescore persons, then elected the Junta, who were eighteen in number. A mode of election so perfectly free and unobjectionable gave to the Junta of Cadiz a proportionate influence over the people; but they themselves, proud of being, as they imagined, the only legally-constituted body in Spain, became immediately jealous of their power, and hostile to the establishment of any other.

*Resigna-  
tion of the  
Cabildo*

It was, however, essential to the salvation of the country that some government should be established, which would be recognized by the whole of Spain. The members of the Central Junta, who had arrived in the Isle of Leon, would fain have continued their functions; they found it vain to attempt this, and then, yielding to necessity, they suffered themselves to be

guided by Jovellanos, who represented to them the necessity of appointing a regency, not including any individual of their own body. Mr. Frere, acting as British minister till Marquis Wellesley's successor should arrive, exerted that influence which he so deservedly possessed, first to enforce the advice of Jovellanos upon his colleagues, and afterwards to make the Junta of Cadiz assent to the only measure which could preserve their country from anarchy; but so little were they disposed to acknowledge any authority except their own, that, unless the whole influence of the British minister had been zealously exerted, their acquiescence would not have been obtained. The Archbishop of Lao-dicea, who was president of the Central Junta, the Conde de Altamira, Valdes, and Ovalle, had been seized at Xerez, and were in imminent danger from the blind fury of the populace, if some resolute men had not come forward and saved them, by persuading the mob to put them under custody in the Carthusian convent, as prisoners of state. They were indebted for their liberation to Castaños, who in this time of danger had hastened to the Isle of Leon, and took measures for having them safely conducted thither. Their arrival made the number of members three-and-twenty; and on the 29th of January this government issued its last decree. Voluntarily they cannot be said to have laid down their power, but the same presiding mind which pervaded their former writings made them resign

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it with dignity. “Having,” they said, “re-assembled in the Isle of Leon, pursuant to their decree of the 13th, the dangers of the state were greatly augmented, although less by the progress of the enemy than by internal convulsions. The change of government which they themselves had announced, but had reserved for the Cortes to effect, could no longer be deferred without mortal danger to the country. But that change must not be the act of a single body, a single place, or a single individual ; for in such case, that which ought to be the work of prudence and of the law, would be the work of agitation and tumult ; and a faction would do that, which ought only to be done by the whole nation, or by a body lawfully representing it. The fatal consequences which must result from such disorder were apparent ; there was no wise citizen who did not perceive, no Frenchman who did not wish for them. If the urgency of present calamities, and the public opinion which was governed by them, required the immediate establishment of a Council of Regency, the appointment of that council belonged to none but the supreme authority, established by the national will, obeyed by it, and acknowledged by the provinces, the armies, the allies, and the colonies of Spain ; . . the sole legitimate authority, which represented the unity of the power of the monarchy.”

*A regency  
appointed.*

After this preamble they nominated as regents Don Pedro de Quevedo y Quintana, Bishop of

Orense ; D. Francisco de Saavedra, late president of the Junta of Seville ; General Castaños ; Don Antonio de Escaño, minister of marine ; and D. Esteban Fernandez de Leon, a member of the council of the Indies, as representative of the colonies. To these persons the Junta transferred its authority ; providing, however, that they should only retain it till the Cortes were assembled, who were then to determine what form of government should be adopted ; and that the means which were thus provided for the ultimate welfare of the nation might not be defeated, they required that the regents, when they took their oath to the Junta, should swear also that they would verify the meeting of the Cortes at the time which had been appointed. The new government was to be installed on the third day after this decree. The Junta accompanied it with a farewell address to the people, condemning the tumult at Seville, and justifying themselves, like men who felt that they had been unjustly accused, because they had been unfortunate. Neither their incessant application to the public weal, they said, had been sufficient to accomplish what they desired, nor the disinterestedness with which they had served their country, nor their loyalty to their beloved but unhappy king, nor their hatred to the tyrant and to every kind of tyranny. Ambition, and intrigue, and ignorance had been too powerful. “ Ought we,” they said, “ to have let the public revenues be plundered, which base interest and

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selfishness were seeking to drain off by a thousand ways? Could we satisfy the ambition of those who did not think themselves sufficiently rewarded with three or four steps of promotion in as many months? or, could we, notwithstanding the moderation which has been the character of our government, forbear to correct, with the authority of the law, the faults occasioned by that spirit of faction, which was audaciously proceeding to destroy order, introduce anarchy, and miserably overthrow the state?"

Then drawing a rapid sketch of the exertions which they had made since they were driven from Aranjuez, . . . "Events," they said, "have been unsuccessful, . . . but was the fate of battles in our hands? And when these reverses are remembered, why should it be forgotten that we have maintained our intimate relations with the friendly powers; that we have drawn closer the bonds of fraternity with our Americas; and that we have resisted with dignity the perfidious overtures of the usurper? But nothing could restrain the hatred which, from the hour of its installation, was sworn against the Junta. Its orders were always ill interpreted, and never well obeyed." Then, touching upon the insults and dangers to which they had been exposed in the insurrection at Seville, . . . "Spaniards," they continued, "thus it is that those men have been persecuted and defamed, whom you chose for your representatives; they who without guards, without troops, without

punishments, confiding themselves to the public faith, exercised tranquilly, under its protection, those august functions with which you had invested them! And who are they, mighty God! who persecute them? the same who, from its installation, have laboured to destroy the Junta from its foundations; the same who have introduced disorder into the cities, division into the armies, insubordination into the constituted authorities. The individuals of the government are neither perfect nor impeccable; they are men, and as such liable to human weakness and error. But as public administrators, as your representatives, they will reply to the imputations of these agitators, and show them where good faith and patriotism have been found, and where ambitious passions, which incessantly have destroyed the bowels of the country. Reduced from henceforward by our own choice to the rank of simple citizens, without any other reward than the remembrance of the zeal and of the labours which we have employed in the public service, we are ready, or, more truly, we are anxious, to reply to our calumniators before the Cortes, or the tribunal which it shall appoint. Let them fear, not us; let them fear, who have seduced the simple, corrupted the vile, and agitated the furious; let them fear, who, in the moment of the greatest danger, when the edifice of the state could scarce resist the shock from without, have applied to it the torch of dissension, to reduce it to ashes. Re-

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member, Spaniards, the fate of Porto! an internal tumult, excited by the French themselves, opened its gates to Soult, who did not advance to occupy it till a popular tumult had rendered its defence impossible. The Junta warned you against a similar fate after the battle of Medellin, when symptoms appeared of that discord which has now with such hazard declared itself. Recover yourselves, and do not accomplish these mournful presentiments!

“ Strong, however, as we are in the testimony of our own consciences, and secure in that we have done for the good of the state as much as circumstances placed within our power, the country and our own honour demand from us the last proof of our zeal, and require us to lay down an authority, the continuance of which might draw on new disturbances and dissensions. Yes, Spaniards, your government, which, from the hour of its installation, has omitted nothing which it believed could accomplish the public wish; which, as a faithful steward, has given to all the resources that have reached its hands no other destination than the sacred wants of the country; which has frankly published its proceedings; and which has evinced the greatest proof of its desire for your welfare, by convoking a Cortes more numerous and free than any which the monarchy has ever yet witnessed, resigns willingly the power and authority which you have confided to it, and transfers them to the Council of Regency, which it has

established by the decree of this day. May your new governors be more fortunate in their proceedings ! and the individuals of the Supreme Junta will envy them nothing but the glory of having saved their country, and delivered their King."

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Thus terminated the unfortunate but ever-memorable administration of the Central Junta, a body which had become as odious before its dissolution, as it was popular when it was first installed. If in their conduct there had been much to condemn and much to regret, it may be admitted, upon a calm retrospect, that there was hardly less to be applauded and admired. Spain will hereafter render justice to their intentions, and remember with gratitude that this was the first government which addressed the Spaniards as a free people, the first to sanction those constitutional principles of liberty which had for so many generations been suppressed. It was to be expected, when such tremendous events were passing, and such momentous interests at stake, that their errors would be judged of by their consequences without reference to their causes. An unsuccessful administration is always unpopular ; and in perilous and suspicious times, when the affairs of state go ill, what is the effect of misjudgement, or weakness, or inevitable circumstances, is too commonly and too readily imputed to deliberate treason. Such an opinion had very generally prevailed against the Central Junta ; but when this power

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was at an end, and nothing would have gratified the people more than the exposure and punishment of the guilty, not even the shadow of proof could be found against them. They were inexperienced in business, they had been trained up in prejudice, they partook, as was to be expected, of the defects of the national character; but they partook, and some of them in the highest degree, of its virtues also: and their generous feeling, their high-mindedness, and unshaken fortitude, may command an Englishman's respect, if it be contrasted not merely with the conduct of the continental courts, but with the recorded sentiments of that party in our own state, who, during this arduous contest, represented the struggle as hopeless, and whose language, though it failed either to dispirit or to disgust the Spaniards, served most certainly to encourage the enemy. England has had abundant cause to be grateful to Providence, but never, in these latter times, has it had greater than for escaping, more than once, the imminent danger of having this party for its rulers. They would have deserted the last, the truest, of our allies; they would have betrayed the last, the only hope of Europe and of the world; they would have sacrificed our honour first, and when they had brought home the war to our own doors, which their measures inevitably must have done, the lasting infamy which they had entailed upon the nation would have been a worse evil than

the dreadful and perilous trial through which it would have had to pass.

In their choice of the regents the Junta seem to have looked for the fittest persons, without regard to any other considerations. Three of them were well known. The Bishop of Orense was venerable for his public conduct, as well as for his age and exemplary virtues ; no man had contributed more signally to rouse and maintain the spirit of the country. Castaños had received from the Junta a species of ill treatment which was in the spirit of the old government, but for which they made amends by this appointment. When he was ordered as a sort of banishment to his own house at Algeziras, the people of that place, greatly to their honour, mounted a volunteer guard before the house, as a mark of respect ; and the Junta, in the last days of their administration, when they turned their eyes about in distress, called upon him to take the command, and resume the rank of captain-general of the four kingdoms of Andalusia. The call was too late, but he came to the Isle of Leon in time to rescue some members of that body from the populace of Xerez ; and in nominating him to the regency, they seem to have consulted the wishes of the people. Saavedra was in full popularity, and had given good proof of disinterested zeal during the tumult at Seville. Instead of securing his private property, he occupied himself in calming the people, and in preserving the public treasure

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and the more valuable public records ; and as there was a want of vessels, he embarked the public property on board the one which had been hired for his own effects. Escaño had been minister of marine at Madrid, and was known as a man of business and fidelity. Leon's appointment was not agreeable to the Junta of Cadiz, who felt their power, and were determined to derive from it as much advantage as possible ; he therefore declined accepting the office on the plea of ill health, and D. Miguel de Lardizabal y Ariba, a native of the province of Tlaxcalla, in New Spain, and member of the council of the Indies, was appointed in his stead.

*Their injustice towards the members of the Central Junta.*

A government was thus formed, which, receiving its authority from the Supreme Junta, derived it ultimately from the same lawful source, . . the choice of the people and the necessity of the state. In such times, and in a nation which attaches a sort of religious reverence to forms, it was of prime importance that the legitimacy of the new government should be apparent, and its right of succession clear and indisputable. For this Spain was principally indebted to Jovellanos, the last and not the least service which that irreproachable and excellent man rendered to his country. But it was the fate of Jovellanos, notwithstanding the finest talents, the most diligent discharge of duty, the purest patriotism, and the most unsullied honour, to be throughout his life the

victim of the unhappy circumstances of Spain. Seven years' imprisonment, by the will and pleasure of the despicable Godoy, was a light evil compared with the injustice which he now endured from that government which he, more than any other individual, had contributed to appoint and to legitimate. The council of Castille, which first acknowledged the Intruder, and then acknowledged the Junta, in the same time-serving spirit attacked the Junta now that it was fallen, affirmed that its power had been a violent usurpation, which the nation had rather tolerated than consented to, and that the members had exercised this usurped power contrary to law, and with the most open and notorious selfishness and ambition. The people, not contented with their compulsory resignation, accused them of having peculated the public money; and the regency, yielding to the temper of the times, and perhaps courting popularity, acted as if it believed this charge, registered their effects, and seized their papers. Even Jovellanos was ordered to retire to his own province, which happened at that time to be free from the enemy, and there place himself under the inspection of the magistrates. This act is inexpressibly disgraceful to those from whom it proceeded; upon Jovellanos it could entail no disgrace. He had long learnt to bear oppression, and patiently to suffer wrong; but this injury came with the sting of ingratitude, it

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struck him to the heart, and embittered his few remaining days.

This rigorous treatment of the Central Junta was the work of their implacable enemy, the council of Castille, a body which they ought to have dissolved and branded for its submission to the Intruder ; and of the Junta of Cadiz, a corporation equally daring and selfish, who thought that in proportion as they could blacken the character of the former government, they should increase their own credit with the people. The members of that government had given the best proof of innocence ; not one of them had gone over to the enemy, nor even attempted to conceal himself at a time when the popular hatred against them had been violently excited. Several of them had embarked on board a Spanish frigate for the Canaries ; when their baggage was seized, it was, at their own request, examined before the crew, and the examination proved that they had scarcely the means of performing the voyage with tolerable comfort. Tilly died in prison without a trial. This was a thoroughly worthless man, and it might probably have appeared that he had found means of enriching himself when he was sent, in the manner of the republican commissioners in France, to superintend the army which defeated Dupont. But Calvo, who was arrested also and thrown into a dungeon, without a bed to lie on or a

change of linen, and whose wife also was put in confinement, was irreproachable in his public character. He had been one of the prime movers of that spirit which has sanctified the name of Zaragoza, and during the first siege repeatedly led the inhabitants against the French. All his papers had been seized; he repeatedly called upon the regency to print every one of them, to publish his accounts, and bring him to a public trial; but he was no more attended to than if he had been in the Seven Towers of Constantinople. After the Cortes assembled he obtained a trial, and was pronounced innocent.

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The Intruder, following his armies, and thinking to obtain possession of Cadiz, and destroy the legitimate government of Spain, issued a proclamation at Cordoba, characterized by the impiety and falsehood which marked the whole proceedings of the French in this atrocious usurpation. "The moment was arrived," he said, "when the Spaniards could listen with advantage to the truths which he was about to utter. During more than a century the force of circumstances, which masters all events, had determined that Spain should be the friend and ally of France. When an extraordinary revolution hurled from the throne the house which reigned in France, it was the duty of the Spanish branch to support it, and not lay down its arms until it was re-established. But it required a spirit of heroism to adopt such

*Proclamation of the Intruder.*

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a resolution, and the cabinet of Madrid thought it better to wait for that from the progress of time, which it wanted courage to obtain by arms." This truth, for such the Intruder might well call this part of the proclamation, marks, as much as the falsehoods which accompanied it, the devilish spirit by which the French councils had long been possessed; having allured the Spanish Bourbons by oaths and treaties to their own destruction, France now reproached them with the very conduct which she had tempted them to pursue. The paper proceeded to affirm, that, during its whole alliance with France, Spain had been watching an opportunity of falling upon her. "The conqueror of Europe," it continued, "would not allow himself to be duped. The princes of the house of Spain, not having the courage to fight, renounced the crown, and were content to make stipulations for their private interests. The Spanish grandees, the generals, the chiefs of the nation, recognized those treaties. I," said the Intruder, "received their oaths at Madrid, but the occurrence at Baylen threw every thing into confusion. The timid became alarmed, but the enlightened and conscientious remained true to me. A new continental war, and the assistance of England, prolonged an unequal contest, of which the nation feels all the horrors. The issue was never doubtful, and the fate of arms has now declared so. If tranquillity is not immediately

restored, who can foresee the consequence? It is the interest of France to preserve Spain entire and independent, if she become again her friend and ally; but if she continue her enemy, it is the duty of France to weaken, to dismember, and to destroy her. God, who reads the hearts of men, knows with what view I thus address you. Spaniards! the irrevocable destiny is not yet pronounced. Cease to suffer yourselves to be duped by the common enemy. Employ your understanding: it will point out to you in the French troops, friends who are ready to defend you. It is yet time: rally around me! and may this open to Spain a new era of glory and happiness."

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If the Spaniards had had as little wisdom, or as little sense of national honour, as the party who opposed the measures of government in England, they would have believed the Intruder, and submitted to him. This party, who, at the time of Sir John Moore's retreat, told us that the Spaniards had then yielded, and that their fate was decided, now declared, with a little more prudence in their predictions, that the show of resistance must soon be at an end. The king's message, declaring that Great Britain would continue its assistance to the great cause of Spain, as the most important considerations of policy and of good faith required, excited in them the gloomiest forebodings. "We were then still," they said, "to cling to the forlorn hope of maintaining

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of the de-  
pendents  
in England.*

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a footing in Portugal! Our resources were still farther to be drained in supporting our ally, or rather in supporting a system which did not arouse its own people to its defence; and for our efforts, however strenuous, in the support of which we did not receive either their gratitude or their co-operation. It was reported," they said, "that the English army had made a retrograde movement to Lisbon, and actually embarked in the transports at the mouth of the Tagus. Having uniformly declared their opinion, that this expedition, under Lord Wellington, was injurious to the most important interests of the country, as they affected both its resources and its character, they should most sincerely and warmly congratulate the public if such were its termination." That is, they would have congratulated us if we had broken our faith, deserted our allies, fled before our enemies, left Buonaparte to obtain possession of Cadiz and Lisbon, and then waited tremblingly for him upon our own shores, with our resources carefully husbanded till it pleased him to come and take them!

"It has been conjectured," said these hopeful politicians, "that Cadiz might be abundantly supplied from the opposite coast of Barbary. But those who hazarded this opinion were not precisely informed of the state of things on the African coast. The Emperor of Morocco was extremely unfriendly to his Christian neighbours. Cadiz, to be sure,

was an interesting point, which it was our interest to maintain as long as possible ; but they had no expectation that Cadiz, when really attacked, could long hold out. It could not be supplied with fuel with which to bake bread for the inhabitants for one week." While this party thus displayed their presumptuous ignorance, and vented their bitter mortification in insults against the ministry and against our allies, they endeavoured to direct attention toward the Spanish colonies, saying that the great, and indeed only object, of this country, should be to establish a mercantile connexion with the empire which was to be erected there, and recommending that we should take immediate measures for assisting the emigration of the Spanish patriots ! Happily the councils of Great Britain were directed by wiser heads, and the people of Spain actuated by better principles and by a braver spirit. "We are supported," said Romana to his countrymen, "by the illustrious English nation, who are united with the brave Portuguese, our brethren, possessing a common interest with ourselves, and who never will abandon us." The people and the government had the same confidence in British honour. English and Portuguese troops were dispatched from Lisbon to assist in the defence of Cadiz, and Ceuta was delivered in trust to an English garrison.

The Isle of Leon forms an irregular triangle, of which the longest side is separated from the

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*The Isle of  
Leon.*



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main land by a channel, called the river of Santi Petri, ten miles in length, and navigable for the largest ships. This side is strongly fortified, and the situation also is peculiarly strong. The bridge of Zuazo, built originally by the Romans, over the channel, is flanked with batteries, and communicates with the continent by a causeway over impassable marshes. There are two towns upon the island; that which bears the same name, and which contains about 40,000 inhabitants, is nearly in the middle of the isle; the other, called St. Carlos, which stands a little to the north, was newly erected, and consisted chiefly of barracks and other public buildings. Cadiz stands on the end of a tongue of land seven miles in length, extending from the isle into the bay; this isthmus is from a quarter to half a mile broad, flanked on one side by the sea, and on the other by the bay of Cadiz. Along this isthmus, an enemy who had made himself master of the island must pass; new batteries had been formed, new works thrown up, and mines dug; and if these obstacles were overcome, his progress would then be opposed by regular fortifications, upon which the utmost care and expense had been bestowed for rendering the city impregnable. Before this unexpected and unexampled aggression on the part of France, the great object of the Spanish government had been to render Cadiz secure from the sea: as soon, therefore, as the approach of the enemy was certain, one of the

first operations was to demolish all those works on the main land from whence the shipping could be annoyed. This was a precaution which Admiral Purvis had strongly advised after the battle of Medellin, and again as soon as the more ruinous defeat of Areizaga was known. Upon the first report that the enemy were hastening toward Cadiz, in the hope of surprising it, he requested Admiral Alava to remove the ships, and place them in the lower part of the harbour, where they might be secure; but it was not till Mr. Frere had strongly urged the necessity of this precaution that the Spanish Admiral, after much reasoning on his part, reluctantly complied. The ill spirit which at this time prevailed among the naval officers arose rather from the pitiable situation in which they found themselves, than from any predilection for the French, or the more natural feeling of hostility toward the English in which they had grown up. Men being wanted for the land service, and not for the fleet, the navy had been neglected during this contest: the ships were ill manned and miserably stored, the pay far in arrears; and the officers had latterly disregarded their duty as much as they thought themselves disregarded by the government, . . . hopelessness producing discontent, and discontent growing into disaffection. This temper could produce no ill effect when the regency and the people were so well disposed. The fleet was removed in time; and the hulks also in which the miser-

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able prisoners were confined were moved lower down into the bay, and moored under the guns of the English and Spanish ships.

The British Admiral had represented in time how important it was that the batteries on the north side of the harbour should be kept in an efficient state. The danger now was from the land side, not from the sea, and by good fortune the land quarter had been strengthened some fifty years before, at a cost and with a care which had then been deemed superfluous. But the Spanish government had not forgotten that it was on that side Essex had made his attack, and England was the enemy against whom those precautions were taken. At that time every villa and garden upon the isthmus had been destroyed. During after-years of security the ground had again been covered, and was now to be cleared again. The Spaniards, roused by the exertions and example of Alburquerque, as much as by the immediate danger, laboured at the works, and carefully removed every building on the isthmus. Night and day these labours were carried on, and the sound of explosions was almost perpetual. The wood from the demolished buildings was taken into the city for fuel.

*Victor summons the Junta of Cadiz.*

Marshal Victor, before he understood how well the isle was secured, sent a summons to the Junta of Cadiz, telling them he was ready to receive their submission to King Joseph. Jaen, Cordova, Seville, and Granada, he said, had received the French with joy; he expected the

same reception from the people of Cadiz ; and as the fleets and arsenals were the property of the nation, he demanded that they should be preserved for their rightful sovereign. They returned an answer, signed by every individual of their body, declaring that they acknowledged no one for King of Spain but Ferdinand VII. Soult, also, representing the English as the enemies of Spain, insinuated, in a summons to Alburquerque, that it was their intention to seize Cadiz for themselves. Alburquerque replied, no such design was entertained by the British nation, who were not less generous than they were great and brave ; their only object was to assist in the defence of Cadiz with all the means in which they abounded, an assistance which the Spaniards solicited and gratefully received. Cadiz, he added, had nothing to fear from a force of 100,000 men ; the Spaniards knew that the French commanded no more than the ground which they covered, and they would never lay down their arms till they had effected the deliverance of their country.

The service which Alburquerque had rendered was so signal, and its importance so perfectly understood by all the people of Cadiz, that he was deservedly looked upon as the saviour of the place. Having been appointed governor in obedience to the general wish, he became in consequence president of the Junta, as Venegas had been before him, whose obedient policy was now rewarded by the highest station

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*Ill-will of  
the Junta  
towards Al-  
burquerque.*

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to which a subject could be appointed, that of viceroy of Mexico. Alburquerque had not solicited these appointments ; on the contrary, he remonstrated against them, pointing out how impossible it was, that, having the command of the army, he could attend to other duties at the same time ; and in consequence of his representations, D. Andres Lopez de Sagastizabel was nominated to act as his deputy in both capacities. The Junta of Cadiz had obtained their power unexceptionably, but no men ever made a more unworthy use of it ; they had reluctantly assented to the formation of the regency, and when it was formed, endeavoured to restrain and overrule it, and engross as much authority as possible to themselves, in which, unhappily for Spain, and more unhappily for Spanish America, they were but too successful. Alburquerque became the marked object of their dislike, because he had recognised the regency at a moment when, if he had hesitated, they would have struggled to get the whole power of government into their own hands. That spirit, which had never condescended to conceal its indignant contempt for Godoy, could not stoop to court the favour of a Junta of mercantile monopolists. Not that he despised them as such ; his mind was too full of noble enterprises to bestow a thought upon them, otherwise than as men who were called upon to do their duty while he did his.

*The troops  
neglected.*

His first business had been to complete the

unfinished works of defence, especially the *cor-tadura*, or cut across the isthmus, where the battery of St. Fernando was erected; and lest any attempt should be made to pass beside it at low water, the iron gratings from the windows of the public buildings were removed, and placed on the beach as a chevaux-de-frise. While these things were going on, the people of Cadiz manifested a disgraceful indolence; they assembled in crowds on the ramparts, wrapt in their long cloaks, and there stood gazing silently for hours, while the English were employed in blowing up the forts round the bay; appearing, says an eye-witness, indifferent spectators of the events around them, rather than the persons for whose security these exertions were made. Meantime the troops, whose rapid march had placed these idlers out of fear, were neglected in a manner not less cruel to the individuals than it was detrimental to the public service. The points to be protected were so many, that the numbers of this little army did not suffice to guard them, without exhausting the men by double duty. Alburquerque requested that the regiments might be filled from the numberless idle inhabitants of the isle and of Cadiz, who, while they were idle, were at such a time worse than useless. Unless this were done, he said, it was not only impossible for his men to undertake any offensive operations, or even to improve themselves in discipline, but they must be wasted away with fatigue and consequent infirmities. These repre-

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sentations were in vain ; neither was he more successful in requiring their pay, a supply of clothing, of which they stood evidently in need, and those common comforts in their quarters, which were as requisite for health as for decency. The Junta of Cadiz had seven hundred pieces of cloth in their possession, yet more than a month elapsed, and nothing was done toward clothing the almost naked troops. Alburquerque asserts, as a fact within his own positive knowledge, that the reason was, because the Junta were at that time contending with the Regency, to get the management of the public money into their own hands, and meant, if they had failed, to sell this cloth to the government, and make a profit upon it, as merchants, of eight reales *per vara* !

*Alburquerque applies to the Regency in their behalf.*

It is not to be supposed that the Junta were idle at this time ; they had many and urgent duties to attend to ; but no duty could be more urgent than that of supplying the wants and increasing the force of the army. The Duke applied to them in vain for six weeks, during which time he discovered that the Junta looked as much to their private interest as to the public weal ; for from the beginning, he says, their aim was to get the management of the public expenditure, not merely for the sake of the influence which accompanies it, but that they might repay themselves the sums which they had lent, and make their own advantage by trading with the public money. At length he applied to the Regency. The regents, feeling how little

influence they possessed over the Junta, advised the Duke to publish the memorial which he had presented to them, thinking that it would excite the feelings of the people. In this they were not deceived; . . . the people, now for the first time called upon to relieve the wants of the soldiers, exerted themselves liberally, and there was not a family in which some contribution was not made for the defenders of the country. But the Junta were exasperated to the last degree by this measure, which their own culpable neglect had rendered necessary. Alburquerque's memorial contained no complaint against them; it only stated the wants of the soldiers, and requested that, unless those wants were supplied, he might be relieved from a command, the duties of which, under such circumstances, it was not possible for him to perform. Though he was persuaded of their selfish views, he had no design of exposing an evil which there was no means of remedying; and when he understood how violently they were offended, he addressed a letter to them, disclaiming any intention of inculpating them, in terms which nothing but his earnest desire of avoiding all dissensions that might prove injurious to the country could either dictate or justify. This did not prevent the Junta from publishing an attack upon him, in reply, of the most virulent nature. They reproached him with having exposed the wants and weakness of the army; entered into details as frivolous in themselves as they were false in

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their application, to show that they had done every thing for the soldiers ; declared, with an impudence of ingratitude which it is not possible to reprobate in severer terms than it deserves, that his cavalry had retreated too precipitately, and ought to have brought in grain with them ; and concluded by a menacing intimation, that the people of Cadiz were ready to support them against any persons who should attempt to impeach their proceedings. If the Junta of Cadiz had no other sins to answer for, this paper alone would be sufficient to render their name odious in history ; so unprovoked was it in its temper, so false in its details, so detestable for its ingratitude. Had Albuquerque been capable of consulting his own safety by a precipitate retreat, Portugal, as he said, and the English army were at hand, . . and he needed not to have undertaken an arduous march of 260 miles in the face of a superior enemy, and in direct disobedience of the orders of his government. If the cavalry which saved Cadiz, and which they thus wantonly accused of retreating too precipitately, had been even a quarter of an hour later, it could not have entered the Isle of Leon. “ This,” said the indignant Duke, “ is the patriotism of the Junta of Cadiz ; the enemy is at the gates, and they throw out a defiance to the general and the army who protect them !”

*He resigns  
the com-  
mand.*

But Albuquerque was too sincere a lover of his country to expose it to the slightest danger, even for the sake of his own honour. He could

not resent this infamous attack without exciting a perilous struggle ; and without resenting it he felt it impossible to remain at the head of the army. Having thus been publicly insulted, a reparation as public was necessary to his honour, and that reparation, for the sake of Spain, he delayed to demand. The Regency would have had him continue in the command ; he however persisted in resigning. No injustice which could be done him, he said, would ever have made him cease to present himself in the front of danger, had he not been compelled to withdraw for fear of the fatal consequences of internal discord. Accordingly, he who should have been leading, and who would have led, the men who loved him to victory, came over to England as ambassador, with a wounded spirit and a broken heart.

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## CHAPTER XXIX.

ATTEMPTS TO DELIVER FERDINAND. OVERTURES  
FOR A NEGOTIATION MADE THROUGH HOLLAND.  
PROCEEDINGS IN PARLIAMENT CONCERNING POR-  
TUGAL. REFORM OF THE PORTUGUEZE ARMY.

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*The Re-  
gency.*

THE regency was acknowledged without hesitation in those provinces which were not yet overrun by the enemy, and every where by those Spaniards who resisted the usurpation; yet with the authority which they derived from the Supreme Junta a portion of its unpopularity had descended upon them. The necessity of their appointment was perceived, and the selection of the members was not disapproved: in fact, public opinion had in a great degree directed the choice; nevertheless, when they were chosen, a feeling seemed to prevail that the men upon whom that unfortunate body had devolved their power could not be worthy of the national confidence. Like their predecessors, they were in fact surrounded by the same system of sycophancy and intrigue which had subsisted under the monarchy. The same swarm was about them: it was a state plague with which Spain had been afflicted from the age of the Philips. Hence it came to pass that the national force, instead of being invigorated

by the concentration of legitimate power, was sometimes paralysed by it. For if a fairer prospect appeared to open in the provinces where the people had been left to themselves and to chiefs of their own choosing, too often when a communication was opened with the seat of government, this unwholesome influence was felt in the appointment of some inefficient general, who was perhaps a stranger to the province which he was sent to command.

A central government was, however, indispensable, as a means of communication first with England, and eventually with other states, but more especially as keeping together the whole body of the monarchy both in Europe and in America. The Spanish nation was not more sensible of this than the British ministry. The French, and they who, like the French, reasoning upon the principles of a philosophy as false as it is degrading, believe that neither states nor individuals are ever directed in their conduct by the disinterested sense of honour and of duty, supposed that the continuance of these temporary administrations must be conformable to the wishes of the British cabinet, whose influence would be in proportion to the weakness and precarious tenure of those who held the government in Spain. But that cabinet had no covert designs; they acted upon the principle of a plain, upright, open policy, which deserves, and will obtain, the approbation of just posterity; and so far were they from pur-

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suing any system of selfish and low-minded cunning, that at this time, when the regency was formed, they were were taking measures for effecting the deliverance of Ferdinand from captivity.

*Schemes for  
delivering  
Ferdinand.*

Montijo, before his hostility to the Junta was openly declared, had proposed a scheme to them for this purpose; but he was too well known to be trusted, and when he required as a preliminary measure that 50,000 dollars should be given him, Calvo, who was the member appointed to hear what he might propose, plainly told him that his object was to employ that sum in raising a sedition against the government; upon which Montijo told him that he had a good scent, and thus the matter ended. A similar proposal was made by some adventurer in Catalonia; the provincial government was disposed to listen to it, but they referred it to General Doyle, and he soon ascertained that the projector only wanted to get money and decamp with it. Meantime the British ministers had formed a well-concerted plan, but dependent upon some fearful contingencies, . . . the fidelity of every one to whom in its course of performance it must necessarily be communicated, and the disposition of Ferdinand to put his life upon the hazard in the hope of recovering his liberty and his throne. The Baron de Kolli, who was the person chosen for this perilous service, was one who in other secret missions had proved himself worthy of con-

*Baron de  
Kolli's at-  
tempt.*

fidence. He took with him for credentials the letter in which Ferdinand's marriage in the year 1802 had been announced by Charles IV. to the King of England, and also letters in Latin and in French from the King, communicating to the prisoner the state of affairs in Spain, and saying how important it was that he should escape from captivity, and show himself in the midst of his faithful people. A squadron, commanded by Sir George Cockburn, landed Kolli in Quiberon Bay, and to that part of the coast Ferdinand was to have directed his flight, for which every needful and possible provision had been made, measures having also been devised for sending the pursuers upon a wrong scent. The scheme had been well laid, and with such apparent probability of success, that it is said the Duke of Kent requested permission to take upon himself the danger of the attempt. The squadron was provided with every thing which could conduce to the convenience and comfort of Ferdinand and his brother; with this view a Roman Catholic priest had been embarked, with a regular set of ornaments and consecrated plate for the Romish service.

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*Kolli's Memoirs, 39.*

Kolli made his way to Paris, completed his arrangements, and was arrested at Vincennes within a fortnight from the day whereon he landed. He had been betrayed by a pretended royalist in the pay of the British government, and by the Sieur Richard, whom he had trusted because he had served bravely under the unfor-

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tunate Prince de Talmont in La Vendée. His credentials and his other papers were seized; and when he was examined by Fouché, who was then minister of police, he had the mortification of being told that the character of the person for whose service he had thus exposed himself had been entirely mistaken, for that no credentials would induce Ferdinand to hazard such an attempt. It was afterwards proposed to him, that as his life and the fortune of his children were at stake, he should proceed to Valençay, and execute his commission, to the end that he might hear from Ferdinand's own lips his disavowal of any connexion with England, . . or that if that prince really entertained a wish to escape, an opportunity might be given him of which the French government might make such use as it deemed best. Kolli rejected this with becoming spirit; and the purpose of the police was just as well answered by sending Richard to personate him. But Ferdinand no sooner understood the ostensible object of his visitor, than he informed the governor of Valençay that an English emissary was in the castle.

It is very possible that Ferdinand may have perceived something in Richard's manner more likely to excite suspicion than to win confidence; for the man was not a proficient in villany, and not having engaged in it voluntarily, may have felt some compunction concerning the business whereon he was sent. His instructions were, if

he should succeed in entrapping Ferdinand, to bring him straight to Vincennes, there probably to have been placed in close confinement: the supposition that a tragedy like that of the Duc D'Enghein was intended cannot be admitted without supposing in Buonaparte far greater respect for the personal character of his victim than he could possibly have entertained. An official report was published, containing a letter in Ferdinand's name, wherein the project for his escape was called scandalous and infernal, and a hope expressed that the authors and accomplices of it might be punished as they deserved. Other papers were published at the same time, with the same obvious design of exposing Ferdinand to the indignation or contempt of his countrymen and of his allies. There was a letter of congratulation to the Emperor Napoleon upon his victories in Austria; an expression of gratitude for his protection, and of implicit obedience to his wishes and commands; details of a fête which he had given just before this occurrence in honour of the Emperor's marriage with the Archduchess Maria Louisa; and a letter requesting an interview with the governor of Valençay upon a subject of the greatest moment to himself, being his wish to become the adopted son of the Emperor, an adoption which, the writer said, would constitute the happiness of his life, and of which he conceived himself worthy by his perfect love and attachment to the sacred person of his

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majesty, and entire submission to his intentions and desires. But it was so notoriously the system of Buonaparte's government to publish any falsehoods which might serve a present purpose, that these letters, whether genuine or fabricated, obtained no credit\*.

As soon as the official report appeared in the English newspapers, Mr. Whitbread asked in the House of Commons whether the letter purporting to be written by his Majesty to Ferdinand VII. was to be looked upon as a document which had any pretensions to the character of authenticity? a question which Mr. Perceval declined answering. Of course this afforded a topic for exultation and insult to the opponents of the government. The Spaniards felt very differently upon the occasion. Whether those

\* The account of Kolli's examination had in one part been palpably falsified. He was represented as saying that it was the Duke of Kent's wish to send Ferdinand to Gibraltar; but that he would not have assisted in this plan, because it would have been in fact sending him to prison! The whole of these documents are printed in Louis Goldsmith's *Recueil de Decrets, Ordonnances, &c.* t. iv. pp. 302-14; and by Llorente, in his *Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire de la Révolution d'Espagne*, t. ii. pp. 306-342. This unworthy Spaniard expresses there a decided opinion that Kolli himself was the person who went to Valençay, as the official report stated. The Baron, however, has published his own story, and it is confirmed by the

declarations of Richard and Fouché, authentically made after the restoration of the Bourbons.

One curious fact appears in the Baron de Kolli's *Memoirs*. Diamonds to the amount of 200,000 francs were taken from him by the police when he was seized. After the restoration he reclaimed them. The result of his application was a royal ordonnance, in which the King decided, that the other effects belonging to the claimant should be restored to him, but that the diamonds seized at Paris are, and remain, confiscated, as having been given to the Sieur de Kolli by a government then at war with France. And his renewed applications were answered by a repetition of this ordonnance!

who were desirous of forming a new constitution for Spain, or even of correcting the inveterate abuses of the old system, thought it desirable to see Ferdinand in possession of the throne, before their object was effected, may well be doubted; but whatever their opinions might be upon that point, the attempt at delivering him excited no other feelings than those of gratitude and admiration towards Great Britain.

“With what pleasure,” said the best and wisest of their writers, “does the good man who observes the mazes of political events, behold one transaction of which humanity alone was the end and aim! With what interest does he contemplate an expedition intended, not for speculations of commerce, nor for objects of ambition, but for the deliverance of a captive King, in the hope of restoring him to his throne and to his people!”

The British cabinet was sounded, to see whether it would offer such compensations and exchange of prisoners as might extricate Kolli from his perilous situation. This curious proposal was connected with some insidious overtures for peace made then, partly for the purpose of deceiving the French people into a belief that the continuance of the war was owing alone to the inveterate feeling of hostility in England; but more with the design of preparing the Dutch for the annexation of their country to the French empire, an intention which was first avowed in these overtures. Louis

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*Overtures*  
*for peace.*

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Buonaparte was drawn into this transaction by a solemn assurance that no such intention was really entertained; but that it was held forth merely as a feint, in the hope of alarming the British government, and inducing it to make peace, for the sake of averting a political union, which of all measures must be most dangerous to England. The overture was properly rejected upon the ground, that it would be useless, or worse than useless, to open a negotiation when it was certain that insurmountable difficulties must occur in its first stage. A few weeks only elapsed before the purpose which had been solemnly disavowed by Buonaparte's ministers to Louis was carried into effect, by a compulsory treaty, in which that poor king ceded to France the provinces of Zealand and Dutch Brabant, the territory between the Maas and the Waal, including Nimeguen, together with the Bommelwaard and the territory of Altena, inasmuch as it had been adopted for a constitutional principle in France that the *thalweg* or stream of the Rhine formed the boundary of the French empire. About two months after this act of insolent and wanton power an army was ordered into Holland to complete the usurpation, and Louis, giving the only proof of integrity and courage which was possible in his unhappy circumstances, abdicated the throne, and retired into the Austrian dominions, leaving behind him a letter to the Dutch legislature, which contained a full vindication of his own conduct,

and an exposure of Napoleon's traitorous policy, which, given as it was in the most cautious language, and with a remainder of respect and even brotherly affection, might alone suffice to stamp the character\* of that brother with lasting infamy. During his short and miserable reign Louis had done what, considering in what manner he had been placed upon the throne, it might have seemed almost impossible that he should do, he had gained the affections of the Dutch people; not by any good which he did, for his tyrannical brother neither allowed him time nor means for effecting the benevolent measures which he designed, but by the interest which he took in their sufferings, and by his honest endeavours to prevent or mitigate those acts of tyranny which were intended to increase the distress of a ruined country, and prepare it for this catastrophe.

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The conquest of Holland had been an old object of French ambition; but wider views

*Buonaparte's intention of establishing a Western Empire.*

\* Notwithstanding the facility with which, in many instances, Louis was deluded by his brother, and the curious simplicity of character which he exhibits, it is impossible to peruse his *Documens Historiques et Reflexions sur le Gouvernement de la Hollande*, without feeling great respect for him. His conduct was irreproachable, his views benevolent even when erroneous, his intentions uniformly good; and excellent indeed must that disposition have been, which in such trying circumstances always preserved its natural rectitude.

It appears by these documents that the throne of Spain was offered to him before Joseph was thought of, and that he rejected the proposal as at once impolitic and iniquitous. But it is curious to see how completely he had been deceived concerning the course of events in the Peninsula, and still more extraordinary that in the year 1820 (when his book was published) he appears to have obtained no better information upon that subject than was communicated in the *Moniteur* during his brother's reign.

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than Louis XIV. entertained during the spring-tide of his prosperity were at this time disclosed by Buonaparte. A *senatus consultum* appeared early in the year, decreeing that the Papal States should be united to, and form an integral part of the French empire. The city of Rome was declared to be the second in the empire (Amsterdam was named the third); the Prince Imperial was to take the title of King of Rome, and the Emperors, after having been crowned in the church of Notre Dame at Paris, were before the tenth year of their reign to be crowned in St. Peter's also. The measures that were designed to follow upon this decree were unequivocally intimated, in that semi-official manner by which Buonaparte's schemes of ambition were always first announced. "The Roman and German imperial dignity," it was said, "which, with regard to Rome, had long been an empty name, had ceased to exist upon the abdication of the Emperor Francis; from that time, therefore, the great Emperor of the French had a right to assume the title. Napoleon, who revoked the gifts which Charlemagne made to the bishops of Rome, might now, as legitimate lord paramount of Rome, like his illustrious predecessor, style himself Roman and French Emperor. He restores to the Romans the eagle which Charlemagne brought from them, and placed upon his palace at Aix la Chapelle; he makes them sharers in his empire and his glory; and a thousand years

after the reign of Charlemagne, a new medal will be struck with the inscription *Renovatio Imperii*. After ages of oblivion, the Empire of the West reappears with renovated vigour; for Napoleon the Great must be looked on as the founder of a revived Western Empire, and in this character he will prove a blessing to civilized Europe. The peace of Europe will thus be completely re-established. The great number of well-meaning people, to whom Napoleon's power seemed oppressive, while they considered themselves as exempt from any engagement towards him, will fulfil their new duties with inviolable fidelity. Considered in this point of view, the re-establishment of the Western Empire is a duty which Napoleon owes not less to the law of self-preservation, than to the repose of Europe."

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No opposition to this project could have been offered by the continental princes; the yoke was upon their necks: it only remained for him to complete the subjugation of the Peninsula, and this appeared to him and his admirers an easy task, to be accomplished in one short campaign. There was no longer any Spanish force in the field capable of even momentarily diverting the French from their great object of destroying the English army, and obtaining possession of Portugal, and to that object Buonaparte might now direct his whole attention and his whole power.

Lord Wellington had foreseen this, and clearly

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*Money  
voted for the  
Portuguese  
army.*

*Marquis  
Wellesley ;*

perceiving also what would be the business of the ensuing campaign, had prepared for the defence of Portugal in time. It was necessary that we should carry on the war in that country as principals rather than as allies, and for this full power had been given by the Prince of Brazil. As yet little had been done toward the improvement of the Portuguese army ; like the government, it was in the worst possible condition ; both were in the lowest state of degradation to which ignorance, and imbecility, and inveterate abuses could reduce them. Early in the session, parliament was informed that the King had authorized pecuniary advances to be made to Portugal, in support of its military exertions, and had made an arrangement for the maintenance of a body of troops not exceeding 30,000 men. Twenty thousand we already had in our pay, the sum for whom was estimated at 600,000*l.* ; for the additional ten, it was stated at 250,000*l.* to which was to be added 130,000*l.* for the maintenance of officers to be employed in training these levies, and preparing them to act with the British troops. This led to a very interesting debate in the House of Lords. Marquis Wellesley affirmed, “ that Portugal was the most material military position that could be occupied for the purpose of assisting Spain : great disasters, he admitted, had befallen the Spanish cause, still they were far from sinking his mind into despair, and still he would contend, it was neither politic nor just to manifest any intention

of abandoning Portugal. What advantage could be derived from casting over our own councils, and over the hopes of Portugal and Spain, the hue and complexion of despair? To tell them that the hour of their fate was arrived, . . . that all attempts to assist, or even to inspirit their exertions in their own defence, were of no avail, . . . that they must bow the neck and submit to the yoke of a merciless invader, . . . this indeed would be to strew the conqueror's path with flowers, to prepare the way for his triumphal march to the throne of the two kingdoms! Was it then for this that so much treasure had been expended, . . . that so much of the blood had been shed of those gallant and loyal nations? Whatever disasters had befallen them, they were not imputable to the people of Spain. The spirit of the people was excellent, and he still ventured to hope that it would prove unconquerable. All their defeats and disasters were solely to be ascribed to the vices of their government. It was the imbecility, or treachery, of that vile and wretched government which first opened the breach through which the enemy entered into the heart of Spain; that delivered into hostile hands the fortresses of that country; and betrayed her people defenceless and unarmed into the power of a perfidious foe. Let us not contribute to accomplish what they have so inauspiciously begun! Let not their lordships come to any resolution that can justify Portugal in relaxing her exertions, or Spain

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in considering her cause as hopeless. Yet what other consequence would result from prematurely withdrawing the British troops from Portugal, or retracting the grounds upon which we had hitherto assisted her?"

*Lord Grenville;*

Lord Grenville replied. "He felt it," he said, "an ungrateful task, . . a painful duty, . . to recal the attention of their lordships to his former predictions, which they had despised and rejected, but which were now, all of them, too fatally fulfilled. His object, however, was not a mere barren censure of past errors, but rather, from a consideration of those errors, to conjure them to rescue the country from a continuance of the same disasters, and to pay some regard to the lives of their fellow-citizens. Were they disposed to sit in that house day after day, and year after year, spectators of wasteful expenditure, and the useless effusion of so much of the best blood of the country, in hopeless, calamitous, and disgraceful efforts? It was a sacred duty imposed upon them to see that not one more life was wasted, not one more drop of blood shed unprofitably, where no thinking man could say that, by any human possibility, such dreadful sacrifices could be made with any prospect of advantage. Was there any man that heard him, who in his conscience believed that even the sacrifice of the whole of that brave British army would secure the kingdom of Portugal? If," said he, "I receive from any person an answer in the affirmative, I shall be

able to judge by that answer of the capacity of such a person for the government of this country, or even for the transaction of public business in a deliberative assembly. By whatever circumstances, . . . by whatever kind of fate it was, I must say, that I always thought the object of the enterprise impossible; but now I believe it is known to all the people of this country, that it has become certainly impossible. Was it then too much to ask of their lordships that another million should not be wasted, when nothing short of a divine miracle could render it effectual to its proposed object?" In these strong and explicit terms did Lord Grenville declare his opinion, that it was impossible for a British army to secure Portugal; and thus distinctly did he affirm, that the opinion of a statesman upon this single point was a sufficient test of his capacity for government.

After touching upon the convention of Cintra and Sir John Moore's retreat, he spoke of the impolicy of our conduct in Portugal. "If those," he said, "who had the management of public affairs had possessed any wisdom, any capacity for enlightened policy in the regulation of a nation's interests and constitution, any right or sound feelings with regard to the happiness of their fellow-creatures, here had been a wide field opening to them. They had got possession of the kingdom of our ally, with its government dissolved, and no means existing within it for the establishment of any regular authority or

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civil administration, but such as the British government alone should suggest. Here had been a glorious opportunity for raising the Portuguese nation from that wretched and degraded condition to which a lengthened succession of mental ignorance, civil oppression, and political tyranny and prostitution had reduced it. Was not that an opportunity, which any men capable of enlarged and liberal views of policy, and influenced by any just feelings for the interests of their fellow-creatures, would have eagerly availed themselves of? Would not such men have seized with avidity the favourable occasion to rescue the country from that ignorance and political debasement, which rendered the inhabitants incapable of any public spirit or national feeling? Here was a task worthy of the greatest statesmen; here was an object, in the accomplishment of which there were no talents so transcendant, no capacity so enlarged, no ability so comprehensive, that might not have been well, and beneficially, and gloriously employed. It was a work well suited to a wise and liberal policy, to an enlarged and generous spirit, to every just feeling and sound principle of national interest, . . . to impart the blessings of a free government to the inhabitants of a country so long oppressed and disgraced by the greatest tyranny that had ever existed in any nation of Europe."

Then after arguing that time had been lost in arming and disciplining the Portuguese, he

relapsed into his strain of unhappy prophecy. "He did not," he said, "mean to undervalue the services or the character of the Portuguese soldiery, whom he considered as possessing qualities capable of being made useful, but he would never admit that they could form a force competent to the defence of the kingdom; they might be useful in desultory warfare, but must be wholly unfit for co-operation with a regular army. He was not afraid, therefore, of any responsibility that might be incurred by his stating, that if the safety of the British army was to be committed on the expectation of such co-operation, it would be exposed to most imminent and perhaps inevitable hazard. But if these 30,000 men were not composed of undisciplined peasants and raw recruits, but consisted of British troops, in addition to the British army already in Portugal, he should consider it nothing but infatuation to think of defending Portugal, even with such a force. Against a power possessing the whole means of Spain, as he must suppose the French to do at this moment, Portugal was the least defensible of any country in Europe. It had the longest line of frontier, compared with its actual extent, of any other nation; besides, from its narrowness, its line of defence would be more likely to be turned; and an invading enemy would derive great advantages from its local circumstances. As to the means of practical defence afforded by its mountains, he should only ask, whether the experi-

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ence of the last seventeen years had taught the world nothing ; whether its instructive lessons were wholly thrown away? Could it be supposed that a country so circumstanced, with a population without spirit, and a foreign general exercising little short of arbitrary power within it, was capable of any effectual defence?" Lord Grenville concluded this memorable speech, by moving, as an amendment to the usual address, "that the house would without delay enter upon the consideration of these most important subjects, in the present difficult and alarming state of these realms."

*Earl of Liverpool ;*

"It was not the fault of ministers," Lord Liverpool replied, "nor of the person whom they had sent thither as his majesty's representative, if the exertions of the Portuguese government were not correspondent to the dangers of the crisis. The state of the country must be recollected, which might truly be said to have been without a government ; all the ancient and established authorities having disappeared with the Prince Regent. But, under these unpromising circumstances, every thing was done which could be done. There was no time lost ; there was no exertion untried ; there was no measure neglected. Never were greater exertions made to provide a sufficient force, and never were they more successful. The noble baron had triumphantly asked, what have we gained in the Peninsula? We have gained the hearts and affections of the whole population of

Spain and Portugal; we have gained that of which no triumphs, no successes of the enemy could deprive us. In Portugal, such is the affection of the inhabitants, that there is no want of a British soldier that is not instantly and cheerfully supplied. Look to Spain! What is the feeling of the people, even in this awful moment of national convulsion and existing revolution? It is that of the most complete deference to the British minister and government; and so perfect is their confidence in both, that they have placed their fleet under the orders of the British admiral. Would a cold, cautious, and phlegmatic system of policy have ever produced such proofs of confidence? Would indifference have produced those strong and signal proofs of affection? Whatever might be the issue of the contest, to this country would always remain the proud satisfaction of having done its duty. He trusted we should never abandon Spain, so long as any hope remained of the possibility of ultimate success. We were bound by every sentiment of honour and good faith to support a people who had given proofs of honour, of good faith, and of bravery, which have never been exceeded by any nation."

Earl Moira replied to this, by delivering opinions which, as a soldier, he would never have conceived, if he had not been possessed by party spirit. "Every thing which the ministers attempted," he said, "betrayed, as the universal opinion of the public pronounced, a total

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Earl  
Moira;

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want of judgement, foresight, and vigour ; and, as the climax of error, they now seemed resolved to defend Portugal, . . according to a plan of defence, too, which was perfectly impracticable. For it was utterly ridiculous to suppose, that the ideas of Count La Lippe, as to the practicability of defending Portugal from invasion, could now be relied upon. We should be allowed to retain Portugal, under our present system, just so long as Buonaparte thought proper. The administration of these men had been marked by the annihilation of every foreign hope, and the reduction of every domestic resource ; they who vaunted of their resolution and power to protect and liberate the Continent, had only succeeded in bringing danger close to our own shores ? And why ? because they sacrificed the interests of the nation, and violated every principle of public duty, to gratify their personal ambition and personal cupidity. He was speaking the language of ninety men out of a hundred of the whole population of the country, when he asserted, that they deserved marked reprobation, and exemplary punishment."

*Lord Sidmouth ;*

Viscount Sidmouth regretted the opportunities which had been lost, but, with his English feeling and his usual fairness, insisted that it was incumbent upon us to stand by our allies to the uttermost. The Marquis of Lansdown objected to the measures of ministry more temperately than his colleagues in opposition, maintaining that it was bad policy to become a prin-

cipal in a continental war. Lord Erskine spoke  
 in a strain of acrimonious contempt, mingled  
 with irrelevant accusations and unbecoming le-  
 vity. "There really," said he, "seems to be a  
 sort of predestination, which I will leave the  
 reverend bench to explain, that whenever the  
 French take any country, or any prisoners, they  
 shall have some of our money also. I can hardly  
 account for the infatuation which possesses those  
 men, who suppose they can defend Portugal by  
 sending a supply of British money there. It  
 might as well be expected to accomplish that  
 by sending over the woolsack, with my noble  
 and learned friend upon it."

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Lord Er-  
skine;

The ministers must have been well pleased  
 with the conduct of their opponents; they could  
 not have desired any thing more favourable to  
 themselves than the intemperance which had  
 been displayed, and the rash assertions and  
 more rash predictions, which had been so  
 boldly hazarded against them. Lord Holland

upon this occasion made a remarkable speech,  
 observing, in allusion to Lords Sidmouth and  
 Buckinghamshire, that "he could not under-  
 stand how these lords could give their confi-  
 dence to ministers without being assured that  
 their confidence was deserved. We were obliged  
 in honour," he said, "to do what we could  
 for Portugal, without injury to ourselves, . . in  
 honour, . . for that was the only motive that  
 ought to interest the feelings, or excite the  
 hearts of this or any other nation. But if we  
 were to embark in the cause of that sinking

Lord Hol-  
land.



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people, we were not to load them with our imbecility, in addition to their own weakness. A great plan was necessary ; nothing neutral or narrow, nothing minute, nothing temporary, could enter into it ; but for this qualities were requisite which no man could hope for in the present ministry. Where was the address, the ability, the knowledge, the public spirit, that were the soul of success in such a cause ? He found them shifting from object to object, and hanging their hope on every weak and bending support, that failed them in the first moment of pressure. He thought, that for defence no government could be too free ; by that he meant too democratic ; the words might not be synonymous, but it was in such governments that men felt of what they were capable. There was then the full stretch of all the powers. There was a great struggle, a great allay of the baser passions ; but there rose from them a spirit vigorous, subtilized, and pure ; there was the triumph of all the vehement principles of the nation ; the rapid intelligence, the bold decision, the daring courage, the stern love of country. It was in the hour of struggle that men started up among the ranks of the people ; those bright shapes of valour and virtue that gave a new life to the people ; those surpassing forms of dignity and splendour that suddenly rose up, as if by miracle, among the host, rushed to the front of the battle, and, as in the days of old, by their sole appearance turned the victory. But where was the symptom of a love for free government

in the conduct of the ministry? The government of Portugal had been absolutely in their hands ; had they disburthened it of its obstructions to freedom? Had they pointed its aspect towards democracy? Then as if the cause had been rendered desperate because the British ministry had not introduced democratic principles into the governments of Spain and Portugal, he supported the opinion of his party, and maintained that it would be criminal to force a nation to a defence which might draw down ruin on them. But if we were to withdraw from the contest, it was possible for us to do so without degrading the country by any base avidity for little gains, by seizing upon any of those little pieces of plunder, which were so tempting, and apt to overpower our resistance to the temptation. We might leave the country of our ally with the spirit of friendship and the purity of honour. It was of great moment to us, in even that meanest and lowest view of policy, to leave the people of the Peninsula our friends ; but we must be actuated by a higher principle, and be regretted and revered by those whom we were forced to abandon. He could not expect this from his majesty's ministers, and therefore could not think their hands fit to wield the resources, or sustain the character of the British empire." Lord Holland therefore voted for the amendment, the object of which was, that the cause of the Peninsula should be given up as hopeless.

The debate was not less interesting in the

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Mr. Perceval;

Lower House, when Mr. Perceval moved for a sum not exceeding 980,000*l.* for the defence of Portugal ; “ a vote,” he said “ so consistent with the feelings which the house had professed on former occasions, that he should not have expected any opposition to it. He reminded the house how those who opposed it had been always of opinion that it was impossible for Spain to hold out so long ; that if she succeeded at all, she must succeed at once ; but that she could never maintain a protracted contest against the disciplined armies and enormous resources of France. This was their declared and recorded opinion ; but what was the fact ? Spain had continued the struggle. France might occupy the country with an army, but her power would be confined within the limits of her military posts, and it would require nearly as large an army to keep possession of it as to make the conquest. There never had existed a military power capable of subduing a population possessing the mind, and heart, and soul of the Spaniards. The very victories of their enemies would teach them discipline, and infuse into them a spirit which would ultimately be the ruin of their oppressors. Under these circumstances, would it be wise to abandon Portugal ? The last Austrian war had arisen in great measure out of the contest in the Peninsula ; and during the progress of that war, however calamitous the result had proved, it would be in the recollection of the house, that one other day’s successful re-

sistance of the French by the Austrians might have overthrown the accumulated power of the enemy. Such events might again take place, for no man could anticipate, in the present state of the world, what might arise in the course of a short time ; but be that as it might, as long as the contest was, or could be, maintained in the Peninsula, the best policy of this country was to support it."

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To this Sir John Newport replied, "if any question could provoke opposition, it must be that which would make them continue efforts in a cause which every one but the ministers considered hopeless. As for the recorded opinion of parliament, parliament was pledged to support the Spaniards while they were true to themselves ; but that they had been true to themselves he denied." Then assuming that the French must necessarily drive us out of Portugal, he asked what was to be done with the 30,000 Portuguese soldiers ? " Were they to be brought to this country, and added to the already enormous foreign army in its service ? Or were they to be sent to Brazil ? Or to be left fully equipped, and ready to add to the military force of Buonaparte ?" In the course of his speech Sir John Newport endeavoured to show that the Portuguese levies had not been expedited as they ought to have been. Mr. Villiers, who had been our minister in Portugal, made answer, " that the government there was administered with great vigour ; large supplies of

Sir J. Newport ;

Mr. Villiers ;

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money had been raised to meet the public exigencies ; the old military constitution of the country had been restored : the finances were ably administered and well collected ; and the war department conducted with energy and ability. If Spain," he said, " had done its duty equally with Portugal, in supporting the efforts of Great Britain, its cause would already have triumphed, and there would not now have been a Frenchman upon the Spanish territory."

*Mr. Curwen ;*

Mr. Curwen said, " that as the Portuguese people had suffered a French army to overrun their country without any resistance, he was not for placing much reliance upon the Portuguese troops. If the enemy could point out what he would wish that we should undertake, his first wish would be, that we should attempt to defend Portugal. Buonaparte," he said, " could not receive more cheering hopes of ultimate success, than he would derive from learning that the present ministers were to continue in office, and that the House of Commons still persisted in placing a blind confidence in them, and enabling them to enter upon measures which, in their inevitable result, could not fail to answer all his purposes. The vote of the house this night, if it should decide against attempting the defence of Portugal, would be more important than if we were to take half the French army prisoners."

*Mr. Leslie Foster ;*

Mr. Leslie Foster then rose, and his speech, in the spirit which it breathed, and the know-

ledge which it displayed, formed a singular contrast to the harangues of the opposition. "The present proposition of his majesty," said he, "is partly connected with his past conduct towards the Peninsula; it is but a continuance and extension of the same spirit of British resistance. It is now, however, open to the reprehension of two classes of politicians; those who think we never ought to have committed ourselves for the salvation of Portugal and Spain; and those who, having approved of that committal while the event appeared doubtful, think that the overwhelming power of France has at length brought this tragedy so nearly to a close, that nothing is left for us, but to escape if possible from being sharers in its catastrophe. Hope, they contend, has vanished; there is no longer room for prediction; history has already recorded, in letters of blood, the fate that awaits our perseverance. To me the aspect of the Peninsula appears an enigma, which it is no reflection on any ministers not perfectly to have understood; a revolution bursting out at a period the least expected, exhibiting events in its progress the most singularly contradictory, and pregnant with results which I still think no man living can foresee. If, on the one hand, we are referred to the apathy of Gallicia during the retreat of Sir John Moore, . . if we are desired to remember Ocaña and Tudela, and all the other defeats which the Spaniards have endured, and

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endured without despondency, . . must we not in candour remember that there was a battle of Baylen? Are we to shut our eyes to the extraordinary phenomenon, that in Catalonia, the very next province to France, the French, at this hour, appear to be as often the besieged as the besiegers? and can we forget Zaragoza and Gerona? But above all, shall we not do justice to that singular obstinacy, to give it no more glorious a character, which has sustained their spirit under two hundred defeats, and which, in every period of the history of Spain, has formed its distinguishing characteristic? The expulsion of the Moors was the fruit of seven centuries of fighting uninterrupted, and of 3600 battles, in many of which the Spaniards had been defeated. In the beaten but persevering Spaniards of these days we may trace the descendants of those warriors, as easily as we recognize the sons of the conquerors of Cressy and of Agincourt in the English who fought at Talavera. We may trace the same fortitude and patience, the same enthusiastic superstition, the same persevering insensibility of failure, and, I will add, the same absolute indifference as to liberty, constitution, or cortes, that distinguished the expellers of the Moors. Because we feel that freedom is the first of blessings, it is too much to say that other nations are to be raised in arms by no other motives than its influence. History should have taught us, that there is another spirit prompting men

to war, and which once poured all Europe forth in the Crusades ; and however we may pronounce on the motives of our ancestors, the fact we cannot deny, that the greatest spectacle of embattled nations ever exhibited on the theatre of war was under governments and systems which indeed were not worth the defending. I believe we may consider the inhabitants of the Peninsula, first, as a multitude of hardy and patient peasantry, buried in ignorance and superstition, and accustomed from their cradles, by the traditions and the songs of their ancestors, to consider the sword as the natural companion of the cross ; and almost inseparably to connect in idea the defence of their religion with the slaughter of their enemies ; and with these predispositions goaded into madness by ecclesiastics, as ignorant almost as their flocks ; but without an idea or a wish for freedom ; with *Fernando Settimo* in their mouths, as a watch-word, and fighting, if you will, for the continuance of the Inquisition. And with these qualifications it is my most firm conviction, that they would have overwhelmed all the armies of France, but that it was their misfortune to be cursed with a nobility in all respects the opposite of the peasantry, differing from them, not merely in their moral qualities, but even in their physical appearance ; a nobility of various degrees of worthlessness, but with a few brilliant exceptions, generally proportioned to the rank of their nobility ; and

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further cursed by a government (I speak not of their kings but of the Junta) both in its form and in its substance the most abominable that ever repressed or betrayed the energies of a nation ; hence desperate from repeated treason, destitute of confidence, not in themselves but in their commanders, unable to stand before the French in battle, but still more unable to abstain from fighting. One rare and unquestionable feature they presented, . . a nation that would fight with France ; and certain I am, that if we had not tried the experiment of fighting by their side, these very men, who now most loudly condemn the course we have pursued, would be calling for the impeachment of these ministers, who had neglected such glorious opportunities ; who, in the crisis of the fate of France, had shrunk from the only field where there was a prospect of contending with success ; who had coldly refused our aid to the only allies who were ever worthy of British co-operation. It is too much a habit to call for the fruits of our battles, tacitly assuming that nothing but the absolute and complete attainment of our object can justify having fought them. I never can agree to measure the justification of a battle by the mere fruits of victory ! yet even on this ground I must contend, that never were there laurels the more opposite of barren, than those which have been reaped by our countrymen in Spain. We, indeed, wanted not to be convinced that

our army, like our navy, equalled in science, and exceeded in courage, that of any other nation in the world : but if we have any anxiety for our character with other armies, if reputation is strength, and if the reputation of a nation, as well as of an individual, consists not in the estimation in which it holds itself, but in the estimation in which it is held by others, it is a false vanity that causes us to shut our eyes and ears to the opinions of other nations. Spain at least had been convinced by the exertions of her government, misrepresenting our failure at Buenos Ayres, and other scenes of our misfortunes, that Great Britain, omnipotent by sea, was even ridiculous on land. So much so, that when the army of General Spencer was landed near Cadiz, than which a finer army never left the English shore, it was the wonder as well as the pity of the Spaniards, that such noble-looking soldiers should be so absolutely incapable of fighting. The ‘beautiful’ army was even the emphatic denomination by which the British forces were distinguished ; and when Sir John Moore was known to be at length on his march, that the beautiful army, the ‘*hermoso exercito*,’ was actually advancing, was a subject of Spanish surprise, at least as much as of Spanish exultation ; but when that army had commenced its retreat, old impressions were revived with tenfold force, ‘*hermoso*’ was no longer the epithet bestowed on it, but one which it is impossible for me to repeat.

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Nor let it be said that Coruña was a full vindication of its fame! We indeed know that British heroism never shone more conspicuous than on that day; but the ray of glory which illuminated that last scene of our retreat, was but feebly reflected through the rest of Spain from that distant part of the Peninsula. The French returned in triumph to Madrid, and boasted that they had driven us into the sea; . . it was certain we were no longer on the land; . . and under such circumstances it is not surprising that Spain should have declined to have given to us all the credit which we really deserved. Some gentlemen, I see, are of opinion that it is no great matter what the Spaniards thought about us; but are we equally indifferent to the opinions of the French? Let us not too hastily conclude that they did full justice to our merits. We are told, indeed, that at Maida and in Egypt we had set that point at rest. Of Maida, I shall only say, that within the last month it has been, for the first time, mentioned in any newspaper of France, and that I believe nine-tenths of the French soldiers have never heard either of the battle, or of the existence of such a place; and as to Egypt, their opinion is universally that which General Regnier, in his most able, but untrue representation, of those events, has laboured to impress, namely, that the treachery of Menou, and the detestation in which the army held the service in Egypt, and their

anxiety to return to France, were the real causes of their expulsion ; and that an overwhelming force of ninety thousand men, of English, Turks, and Indians, which he says, and which they believe, we brought against them, furnished a decent excuse for their surrender. Let us remember too, that it was after these proofs of British military excellence, that Buonaparte, on the heights of Boulogne, parcelled out in promise to his soldiers the estates of the '*nation boutiquiere* : ' let us remember also our own opinions in those days, how general engagements were to be avoided ; . . how a system of bush-fighting was to be adopted in Kent ; . . and our hopes that England might be saved after London might be lost, . . or what inundations we should make to protect it. Such language was then termed 'caution : ' but on the proud eminence on which we are now placed, we may afford to acknowledge there was in it some mixture of distrust in the good old bayonet of Britain. Where are the promises of Buonaparte now ? The very ridicule of such assertions would render it impossible for him to repeat them. It is these guilty ministers who have taught to him, and what I think of much more consequence, have taught to England, another style of conversation. They have fairly tried that point, so carefully avoided by their predecessors ; they have brought our armies to a meeting with the finest armies of France ; and have added more to our strength, as well as to

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our glory, by fighting in Spain, than their predecessors by abstaining from it in Poland... Such is the view which I take of what is past: With respect to the second point, whether the time is indeed come, when our further assistance can only be destruction to ourselves, without being serviceable to our allies, a very little time must show us that; and if there are indeed good grounds of hope, any premature expression of our despondency will certainly extinguish them. The Junta is at length demolished. The French are again dispersed over every part of the Peninsula: the people are still every where in arms. Let us not damp that spirit which may effect much, and which must effect something, . . which must at least give long employment to the forces of our enemy. If, indeed, it depended solely upon us, whether our allies should continue that sacrifice of blood which they have so profusely shed, I should not think us justifiable in purchasing our quiet at such a price: but convinced as I am, that whether we stand by them, or forsake them, those gallant nations will still continue to bleed at every pore, our assistance assumes a new character; and independent of the advantages to be derived to ourselves, . . independent of 200,000 Frenchmen already fallen, . . independent of not less than 300,000 more required even to preserve existence in the Peninsula, . . independent of Brazil and South America, for ever severed from our enemies, . . and independent of the fleets of the Peninsula,

I trust, rescued from their grasp, . . independent of these gains to ourselves, there is another feeling binding upon a nation, as well as upon an individual, not to forsake our friend because he is in his greatest danger! . . Still, however, I acknowledge a limit there must be, beyond which we cannot go, and whenever we can agree in declaring that

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*Funditus occidimus, neque habet Fortuna regressum,*

then, indeed, the first laws of self-preservation will call on us to discontinue the contest. But surely Great Britain will not utter such a sentiment until her allies shall be disposed to join in it. They do not despair, and I will never despair of them so long as they do not despair of themselves, . . so long as I should leave it in their power to say to us at a future day, ‘ Whence these chains? . . If you had stood firm a little longer, . . if you had not so soon fainted, . . we should not at this day be in the power of our enemies!’ ”

General Ferguson was the first person who rose after Mr. Leslie Foster had concluded this able and manly speech. “ He had been in Portugal,” he said, and “ he did not think there were 30,000 soldiers in that country ; those that were there had certainly, through the exertions of General Beresford and other British officers, attained an appearance of discipline : but he feared that an army adequate to the task of

*General  
Ferguson ;*

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defending Portugal must be able to make a stand in the first instance ; and if obliged to retreat, must still, as opportunity offered, return to the charge ; and thus make resistance after resistance. Now he was decidedly of opinion, from what he had seen and heard of them, that on the very first defeat the little discipline of the Portuguese army would vanish, and a dispersion be the consequence."

*Mr. Fitzgerald ;*

Mr. Fitzgerald asked whether ministers had employed transports to bring away our cavalry from Portugal ? in this service, he said, our money would be best employed. He had never heard of any achievement performed by the Portuguese, except, indeed, that 2000 of them, with the Bishop of Porto at their head, had entered Porto, and taken twenty-four Frenchmen prisoners. Lord Milton repeated the erroneous proposition of the Marquis of Lansdowne, that it was highly improper to act as principals in a foreign country, instead of as auxiliaries. " No reasonable man," he affirmed, " could vote a million of the public money for such a purpose, when the French were under the walls of Cadiz. It had often been the practice to subsidize foreign troops, but he believed it had never before entered the head of any English statesman to grant subsidies to the Portuguese, . . . to those, in fact, among whom the materials for an army could not be found." Mr. Banks talked of the money : " We had it not to spare, and if we had, even then we ought not to spare

*Lord Milton ;*

*Mr. Banks ;*

it. Too much had already been furnished to the Spaniards. Where were we to find more? specie we had not, and paper would not answer. The enemy were now perhaps in possession of Cadiz, which had escaped immediate capture only through an accident. The Cortes had not even a town in Spain to meet in. It was quite romantic to expect that a British army, of 20,000 or 25,000 men, even with whatever co-operation Portugal could give, would be able to maintain the war there as a principal against France. He must oppose the motion, and recommend that the resources of the country should be husbanded for our defence."

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Upon this, Mr. Jacob, who had recently re-*Mr. Jacob;* turned from Spain, denied that France had any complete occupation of that country, either civil or military. In Catalonia, he said, it would be difficult to say, whether there were at that moment more Spanish towns besieged by the French, or towns occupied by French troops besieged by the Spaniards; and the communications were so completely cut off, that the French could not send a letter from Barcelona to Gerona, without an escort of at least 500 cavalry to protect it. Generally speaking, throughout the whole of Spain, those towns only were surrendered which were under the influence of the nobility and gentry of large estates; but the mass of the people were patriotic, and the villages were defended after the towns had been betrayed. And not only the



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villages, but the mountains, were still obstinately defended. He believed, that among the nobility and gentry, where there were two brothers, the man of great possessions was always for submitting to the enemy, while the other joined the patriotic standard. We had been accustomed to consider civil wars as the most horrible of all kinds of hostilities, but never was any civil war so horrible as that which was now raging in Spain. The massacre, the pillage, and the violence offered to women, were unparalleled. He had lately been witness to some of these atrocities. The town of Puerto Real had surrendered upon terms, and Victor, upon entering it, published a proclamation, promising the most perfect security to all the inhabitants. Nevertheless, he had hardly taken possession before he ordered the men, who were mostly artificers at the docks in Cadiz, to be imprisoned, and the females were marched down to St. Mary's, to be violated by his army.

*Mr. Whitbread;*

It might have been thought that such a statement as this could have produced but one effect, or at least that no man could have been found who would attempt to weaken its effect, by recriminating upon his own country. Mr. Whitbread, however, after observing that he believed Mr. Jacob had gone to Spain upon a mission, half commercial, half diplomatic, demanded of him whether he had been an eye-witness of these atrocities; and if he were, or if he were not, why he had detailed them, unless it was to inflame

the house upon a question where their judgement only ought to decide? "Abuses, no doubt," he said, "must have prevailed; but were gentlemen aware of none committed under circumstances of less provocation, when the clergy received the mandates of power to ascend their pulpits, and issue from them falsehoods not more rank than they were notorious?" Such is the language which Mr. Whitbread is reported to have uttered upon this occasion. He proceeded to ask, "Where was the spirit of the Spaniards? where were its effects? were they seen in suffering the French to pass over the face of their country, like light through an unresisting medium? We were gravely told that the post could not pass unmolested; no doubt this was a most serious calamity, and a conclusive proof of the energy of the popular spirit, . . only, unfortunately, we had the same proof in Ireland! Spain," he averred, "had not done its duty . . no matter from what cause; the people had, however, some excuse, they had been under the selfish sway of an aristocracy, that only wanted to use them as an instrument for effecting their own narrow purposes; their implicit confidence had been abused by the blind bigotry of an intolerant priesthood, . . a priesthood that, whatever it preached, practised not the gospel; they had had the sword in their hands as often as the crosier, and they had had, he feared, in their hearts any thing but the meekness, humility, charity, and peace, that their blessed Master had

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inculcated by his pure precepts, enforced by the example of his spotless life, and sealed by the last sufferings of his all-atoning death. While," said Mr. Whitbread, "I value those precepts and that example, I never can take pleasure in setting man against his fellow-man in a hopeless struggle. I think the present cause hopeless, and as such I never will consent to its being uselessly and cruelly protracted."

*Mr. Hus-*  
*kisson ;*

*Mr. Bath-*  
*urst.*

Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Bathurst spoke like men in whom the principle of opposition was not the pole star of their political course. The question, Mr. Huskisson said, was, whether we were to withhold from his majesty's ministers the means by which the contest might be rendered more likely to be successful. Mr. Bathurst said, it was enough for him to know that an alliance with Portugal had been concluded, and that Portugal, in virtue of that alliance, demanded our assistance. An amendment was moved by Mr. Tierney, tending to refuse the grant, and 142 members voted for it, over whom ministers had a majority of sixty-two. In the Lords, the numbers had been 94, and 124.

To comment upon the language of the opposition in these debates would be superfluous. The ignorance which they displayed of the national character of the Spaniards and Portuguese, and of the nature of the seat of war, the contemptuous superiority which they assumed, and the tone in which they ridiculed and reviled our allies, were of little moment ; but the debate

was of main importance, because the party committed themselves completely upon the defence of Portugal, declaring, in the most confident and positive terms, that it was hopeless, and ought not to be attempted. Their journalists took up the subject in the same strain, and followed the unhappy pattern of prediction which had been set them. One of two things, they said, must necessarily happen to these 30,000 Portuguese troops; either they must fall into the hands of the French, or we must bring them out of Portugal. The possibility that, with a British army, they might be able successfully to defend their country, these men had neither wisdom, nor knowledge, nor virtue to contemplate. Could it be doubted for a moment, they said, that Spain would be subdued, from one extremity to the other, before the end of six months? They copied, too, as faithfully, the false and slanderous representations which were made of the Portuguese. A thousand Portuguese, they said, would fly before a single French company, just as so many gipsies would run away from a constable. We might raise a better legion in Norwood. Was there an English colonel who would give five shillings a dozen for such recruits, or a serjeant who would be at the expense of a bowl of punch for fourscore of them? The French and their partizans did not fail to make due use of what was thus advanced in their favour; but the Portuguese were too well acquainted with the real character and feelings

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of this nation to have their faith in British friendship shaken by the gross misrepresentations of a virulent party : and they knew, perhaps, that statesmen who take part against the government and against the allies of their country, and writers who pervert to the most wicked and perilous purposes the freedom of the press, are the concomitant evils of a free constitution like ours, under which both public and private libellers breed like vermin in a genial climate.

*Reform of  
the Portu-  
guese army.*

Meantime the Portuguese army, which, under a system of complicated abuses, had been reduced to the lowest possible state of degradation, was reformed in all its branches by the indefatigable exertions of Marshal Beresford. He had to contend not only with the inveterate evils which had grown up during the long perversion of government, but with that spirit of insubordination which, at the outbreak of these troubles, the general anarchy had produced. The soldiers had begun to claim and exert the power of choosing their own officers; an end was immediately put to this ruinous license, and at the same time means were taken for removing the cause of complaint wherever it had originated, by recalling the officers as well as the men to a sense of their duty, and by introducing British officers in sufficient number to give the army consistence and effect till they might gradually be replaced by native Portuguese. Equal justice, which in that country had been as little known as liberty of con-

science, was promised and administered ; the troops were told that the Marshal was at all times ready to hear their complaints, through the proper channel ; and that if any officer excused himself from forwarding the complaint of a soldier, the soldier might address it directly to the commander-in-chief. But the Marshal said it was his duty to be impartial, and the officers had as much right to justice as the soldiers. Severe penalties had been denounced against desertion, but with so little effect, that nearly seven hundred cases occurred during the month of April in this year ; the punishment of death was then inflicted on one offender, and two others were degraded to Angola. At the same time the officers were not allowed to absent themselves from their duty under pretext of illness ; certificates to this effect had been so greatly abused, that they were no longer to be regarded without such actual inspection as the Marshal might appoint ; and one person of high family was dismissed the service for a subterfuge of this kind. Courts-martial were made to understand their proper functions by being reprimanded in general orders ; and the *Misericordia* which had interfered to suspend the execution of an officer who had received money from the French, and entered their service, was informed that its privileges did not extend to these cases, and that the sentence must be carried into effect.

It was necessary to raise the military cha-

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racter in the opinion of the soldiers themselves, as well as of the nation. But before this could be done, the sense of cleanliness and decency was to be restored: for the troops, in that sullen state of self-neglect which discomfort and hopelessness produce, had well-nigh lost all sense of either. The Commander-in-chief told them that many of the evils which the army suffered were occasioned by the want of cleanliness; that health could not be preserved without it, that the soldiers must wash themselves frequently, and that it grieved him to say, he must require the officers to set them an example; that fatigue was no excuse for neglecting this essential duty, for after a long march nothing was so refreshing; that every officer must be responsible for the cleanliness of the men under his command, and that he himself would never excuse any officer whom he should see dirty. He gave orders that the men should be provided with soap, brushes, and combs; that they should brush their clothes and clean their shoes every day, and be punished if they neglected this; and as the summer approached, he required the officers, whenever an opportunity occurred, to make the men bathe by companies. The Portuguese soldiers, it was said, like those of every other country, desired to appear with a military air, and with that propriety which belongs to the military character, and the men who most affected this appearance were always the best soldiers; it was the busi-

ness of the officers, therefore, to see that they were provided with every thing necessary for maintaining it. While this indispensable attention to cleanliness was exacted, every possible provision was made both for their health\* and comfort. A dispensation. was obtained from the Pope's Legate, allowing the troops the use of meat while on service, every day in the year, except on Ash-Wednesday and Good-Friday. The huge regimental kettles, which, after the Mahomedan custom, were still used in the Portugueze army, and which, from the inconvenience of carrying them, frequently did not come up with the troops till long after they were wanted, were laid aside, and light tin vessels substituted, which might be always at hand. An injurious custom of marching in their cloaks when it rained, and even using the blanket at such times as an additional covering, was prohibited; the men, they were told, knew by experience, that no clothing could protect them against the rain during a wet march, and therefore they were ordered to keep cloak and blanket dry for their own comfort when they reached the journey's end. The officers and non-commissioned officers were in the habit of kicking and striking the soldiers; wherever British officers commanded this was immediately

\* The prejudice against mercury prevailed so strongly among the native practitioners, that the commander-in-chief, at a time when syphilitic diseases were thinning the ranks, found it necessary to enforce its use in the army and in all the military hospitals.



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forbidden, and their example, with the decided opinion of Marshal Beresford, nearly, or altogether, put a stop to the unmanly practice. The ordinary punishment, though less disgraceful and severe than the abominable system of flogging, proved more frequently fatal; it consisted in striking the soldier on the back, across the shoulders, with the broad side of a sword. The number of strokes, or *pancadas*, never exceeded fifty; but men have not unfrequently been known to drop down dead after receiving thirty, from a rupture of the aorta. Marshal Beresford ordered a small cane to be used instead of the sword; and thus, without altering the national manner of punishment, rendered it no longer dangerous.

There were other evils which were beyond his power. When the troops of the line were recruited, it was neither done by ballot nor by bounty: a certain number were demanded from each district; the captain of that district picked whom he chose, sent them to prison till he had collected the whole number, then marched them to join their regiment. The Marshal introduced the easy improvement of sending them to a recruiting dépôt, to be drilled before they joined; but he fixed upon the peninsula of Peniche, a swampy and unwholesome spot, which proved fatal to many, acting with double effect upon the depressed, half-starved, and ill-treated peasants, who were sent thither. The sick, the lame, and the lazy, were crowded into

the same dungeon when recruited by the Capitam Mor; contagion was thus generated, and very often those, and those especially, who were fit for the service, were carried off by disease. The depôt was afterwards removed to Mafra, which is a healthy situation.

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Over the method of levying troops Marshal Beresford had no control. But the hospitals, which were infinitely more destructive to the army than the sword of the enemy, and would have destroyed it much faster than it could have been recruited, were greatly improved under a British inspector, though the government would not permit his regulations to be carried into effect to their full extent. Still a great and material improvement was accomplished. The commissariat had been so conducted, as to be at once inefficient for the army, and oppressive for the people. A board of administration at Lisbon had its intendants in every province, and its factors in every town. Government contracted for provisions and forage, at fixed prices, with the board, and the board directed its agents to purchase what might be required for the troops on the spot. Payment was made by bills upon the board, which in the best times were seldom taken up till twelve months after they became due, and in the present state of things were considered to be worth nothing. The farmer, therefore, naturally concealed his grain; it was seldom that magazines were formed, or any provision

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made against scarcity; and what the farmer could not or would not sell at the disadvantageous rate which the factors offered, was usually taken, when it could be found, by force. Marshal Beresford got commissaries appointed to the different brigades, but he could not get money for them, and therefore they were of little use. To reform the civil establishments of the army was almost as difficult as it would have been to reform the government; the utmost exertions of the Marshal, aided as they were by Lord Wellington's interference, availed nothing, . . . being opposed by every species of low cunning and court intrigue. For the old corruptions existed in full vigour, notwithstanding the removal of the court to Brazil; and the body politic continued to suffer under its inveterate disease, a *morbus pediculosus*, from which nothing but a system of reform, wisely, temperately, firmly, and constitutionally pursued, could purify it, and restore it to health and strength.

Much, however, was done for Portugal, . . . enough to be ever remembered by that country with gratitude, and by Great Britain with a generous and ennobling pride. An English commissariat, scrupulously exact in all its dealings, relieved the farmers in great measure from the oppression of their own government. The soldiers learnt to respect their officers and themselves; they rapidly improved in discipline; they acquired confidence, and became proud of

their profession. The government itself found it necessary to alter its old system of secrecy and delusion; the dispatches of Lord Wellington and Marshal Beresford were published in the Lisbon Gazette, and the people of Portugal were officially informed of the real circumstances of the war, as fairly and as fully as they had been in the War of the Acclamation.

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## CHAPTER XXX.

SIEGE OF HOSTALRICH. ATTEMPT UPON VALENCIA. CAPTURE OF LERIDA. OPERATIONS BEFORE CADIZ.

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IF proof had been wanting that men of any country may be made good soldiers under good discipline, it might have been seen at this time in Buonaparte's armies, where the Italians, who in their own country ran like sheep before the French, were now embodied with them, and approved themselves in every respect equal to their former conquerors. These men, who were taken by the conscription to bear part in a war wherein they had no concern, who had no national character to support, nothing but the spirit of their profession to animate them, were nevertheless equal to any service required from them, and needed no other excitement than that they were fighting for pay, and plunder, and life. Was it then to be doubted, that if the same care were bestowed in training, the same results would be seen in the Spaniards and Portuguese, who were under the influence of every passion and every principle which can strengthen and elevate the heart of man, . . both people too being alike remarkable for national feeling, and for patience under difficulties and privations, doc-

lity to their superiors, and faithful attachment to those in whom they trust? It was not indeed to be expected that the Spaniards would so far acknowledge their military degradation as to put themselves under the tuition of an ally; Spain had not abated sufficiently of its old pretensions, thus to humiliate itself. Neither indeed was that degradation so complete as it had been in Portugal. The Spanish artillery was most respectable; and there were officers in the army who had studied their profession, and whose talents might have raised them to distinction in the proudest age of Spanish history. But the Portuguese were conscious of their weakness, and in this knowledge they found their strength: for when that brave and generous people, in the extremity of their fortune, submitted implicitly to the direction of their old hereditary ally, . . . when they offered hands and hearts for the common cause, and asked for assistance and instruction, the ultimate success of that cause became as certain as any thing can possibly be deemed by human foresight. With Portugal for the scene of action, and her population ready for every sacrifice that duty might require, it remained only for Great Britain to feel and understand its own strength, and employ its inexhaustible resources in exertions adequate to the occasion.

But Great Britain as yet hardly understood its strength. The cold poison which was continually instilled by party writers into the public ear

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had produced some effect even upon the sound part of the nation. From the commencement of the war it had been proclaimed as a truth too certain to be disputed, that England could no longer as a military power compete with France, consequently that we must rely upon our insular situation, and husband our resources. These opinions had been so long repeated, that they had acquired something like the authority of prescription; the government itself seemed to distrust the national power, and in the fear of hazarding too much, apportioned always for every service the smallest possible force that could be supposed adequate to the object, instead of placing at the general's disposal such ample means as might ensure success. The first departure from this over-cautious system was in the expedition to Walcheren, where a great armament was worse than wasted. That miserable enterprise weakened the government, and in some degree disheartened it; and Lord Wellington, in addition to the other difficulties of his situation, had long to struggle with insufficient means. But the exertions and the experience of the last year had not been lost: the British army had acquired a reputation which, however successfully Buonaparte concealed it from the French people, was felt by his soldiers and his generals: time had been gained for training the Portuguese troops, and preparing for the defence of Portugal; and the British Commander having proved both his enemies and

his allies, had clearly foreseen the course which the war would take, and determined upon his own measures with the calmness of a mind that knew how to make the best advantage of the events it could not control.

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While both parties were preparing for a campaign in Portugal, in which the enemy expected to complete the conquest of the Peninsula, and Lord Wellington felt assured that the tide of their fortune would be turned; while the war before Cadiz was pursued with little exertion or enterprise on either side, and the cities of Andalusia were occupied without a struggle by the invaders; in Catalonia the contest was carried on with renewed vigour. The fall of Gerona enabled the besieging army to undertake farther operations; but the Catalans, as well as the French, had changed their commander. Upon Blake's recall to the south, D. Juan de Henes-trosa had succeeded to the command; the provincial Junta however, in accord with the general wish of the people and of the troops, appointed O'Donnell in his stead, and this nomination was confirmed by the Regency. It gave offence to Garcia Conde, who was an older officer, and had also distinguished himself during the siege of Gerona. He resigned the command of the first division in disgust: this act of intemperance, however, was overlooked, and he was made governor of Lerida, a post of great importance at that time, but to which his services and his character seemed fairly to entitle him. The

*O'Donnell  
appointed  
to the com-  
mand in  
Catalonia.*

*Garcia  
Conde made  
governor of  
Lerida.*

*Von Staff,  
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*Rapid pro-  
motion in  
the Spanish  
armies.*

Duque del Parque had more reason for displeasure at O'Donnell's promotion; in the belief that he was to have the command in Catalonia by the express desire of the Catalan people, he had taken leave of his own army, and Romana had been appointed to succeed him.

If heroes who carry victory with their single presence were to be produced as if by miracle, according to Lord Holland's supposition, by democratic institutions, during such struggles as that in which the Spaniards were engaged, fairer opportunities for their appearance could not have been afforded under the most democratic forms than were given both by the Central Junta and by the Regency. There had been a flagrant exception in the case of Alburquerque; the union of high rank, deserved popularity, and great military talents in his person, had excited unworthy jealousies in some, and worse passions in others: but in every other instance, promotion had rapidly followed upon desert; a rash and even ruinous confidence had been shown where any promise of ability appeared; and men were raised so rapidly, that they became giddy with their sudden elevation. But Henrique O'Donnell justified the expectations which had been formed of him. While the French proclaimed in their official accounts, that now Gerona had been taken, little more was required for the complete subjugation of Catalonia; that the Ampurdam was already reduced; that the peasants, as they were taken in arms, were hung

up in great numbers upon the trees along the road side, and that the French communications had at length been rendered secure, the fall of Gerona, like that of Zaragoza, had animated the Spaniards, not discouraged them : they looked to the spirit which the garrison and the inhabitants had displayed, not to the surrender which famine had rendered inevitable, and in the religious and heroic endurance which had there been manifested, found cause for more ennobling pride and surer hope than a victory in the field would have given them. Eroles was charged by the superior Junta to enforce the decree for embodying every fifth man. He called upon the Catalans in language suited to the times, reminding them of their forefathers who spread terror through the Greek empire ; and referring to those regiments of the Gerona garrison, which but a little while before the siege had been filled up with men thus levied, as having exemplified not less illustriously the powerful effects of discipline. By this means the army was recruited, and the men hoping for change of fortune with every change of commander, entered cheerfully upon the service under O'Donnell, who had hitherto only been known by his adventurous exploits and his success.

In the other parts of Spain, grievously as all had suffered, the scene of action had frequently been shifted ; but in Catalonia there had been no intermission. From the commencement till the termination of the war, the struggle was

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*Conduct of  
the people of  
Villadrau.*

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carried on there without an interval of rest. A memorable instance of the provincial spirit was given at this time by the people of Villadrau, an open town, in the plain of Vich ; on the approach of an enemy's detachment, which they had no means of resisting, the whole of its inhabitants, in the middle of February, retired to the mountains. The French Commandant, finding the place utterly deserted, wrote to the Regidor, telling him that if the inhabitants were not brought back by the following day, he should be obliged to report their conduct to Marshal Augereau, and take the necessary measures for reducing them to obedience : at the same time he assured him that the most effectual means should be used for preserving order. This answer was returned by the Regidor : " All these people, that the French nation may know the love they bear to their religion, their King, and their country, are contented to remain buried among the snows of Montsen, rather than submit to the hateful dominion of the French troops." So many families, in the same spirit, forsook their homes, rather than remain subject to the invaders, that the superior Junta, at O'Donnell's suggestion, issued an order for providing them with quarters in the same manner as the soldiers. The exceptions to this spirit were found, where they were to be expected, in the rich commercial towns, as at Reus. If the people of Barcelona, like those of Villadrau, and of so many smaller places,

had abandoned their houses, that city could not long have been held by the enemy ; in that case the blockade might have been as rigorous, and almost as effectual by land as by sea : but provisions for the use of the inhabitants were allowed by the Spanish generals to enter ; and therefore, though the French might be sometimes inconvenienced, it was certain that they would never be exposed to any serious danger of famine.

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The communication between Gerona and that *Hostalrich* city was impeded by Hostalrich, a modern fortress, overlooking a small and decayed town, which had once been fortified. It is situated on high and broken ground, seven leagues from Gerona. The intermediate country is of the wildest character, consisting of mountains covered with pines ; the road winds through sundry defiles, so narrow, that in most places the river nearly fills up the way ; the pass is so difficult, that in one part it has obtained the name of *El Purgatorio* ; and the outlet is commanded by this fortress. Part of the town had been burnt during the siege of Gerona, when the magazines which had been collected there were taken by the enemy. An enemy's division, under the Italian General Mazzuchelli, occupied it now, preparatory to the siege of the castle ; the inhabitants, upon their approach, took refuge in the church, and there defended themselves till a detachment of the garrison sallied, and relieved them ; and before the blockade of the

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*Commence-  
ment of the  
siege.*

fortress was pressed, they had time to remove and seek shelter where they could. The garrison meantime prepared for a Spanish defence. This fortress, said the governor Julian de Estrada, is the daughter of Gerona, and ought to imitate the example of its mother!

The siege began on the 13th of January: a week afterwards one of the outworks, called the Friars' Tower, was attacked; the officer in command, D. Francisco Oliver, was killed by a hand-grenade, which exploded as he was in the act of throwing it; and the man who succeeded him, immediately, either through cowardice, or from a worse motive, surrendered his post. Augereau, who was at this time come to inspect the siege and accelerate the operations, thought it a good opportunity to intimidate the governor. He therefore summoned him to surrender, saying, that the garrison should in that case be allowed the honours of war, and marched as prisoners into France; giving them two hours to reply, and warning them that if they refused to submit upon this summons, they must not expect to be treated like soldiers, but should suffer capital punishment, as men taken in rebellion against their lawful king. Estrada replied, that the Spaniards had no other king than Ferdinand VII. The siege was carried on with little vigour till the 20th of February, when the French began to bombard the fort; but the men who defended it showed themselves worthy of the cause in which they were engaged, and

of their commander ; and here, as at Gerona, the French, with all their skill, and all their numbers, found that the strength of a fortress depends less upon its walls and bulwarks, than upon the virtue of those who defend it.

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The force under Augereau's command was sufficiently large for carrying on the siege of Hostalrich, commencing operations against Lerida, and acting at the same time against O'Donnell, whose troops the French Marshal despised, as consisting merely of raw levies. He was soon taught to respect them and their General ; for when he himself went to Barcelona with a considerable convoy of stores, and 1500 of the garrison were sent to occupy O'Donnell's attention, not a fifth part of the number effected their retreat into the city. More than 500 of the French were slain, and nearly as many taken prisoners. They suffered a greater loss from desertion. Buonaparte had pursued the wicked policy of forcing into his own service the Austrian prisoners taken in the late war ; 800 of these men went over to the Spaniards in a body, stipulating only that they might keep their arms, and remain together, till they should be distributed among the regiments of the line. General Doyle had addressed proclamations to the soldiers in the French service, not only in the French and Spanish languages, but in Italian, Dutch, German, and Polish also, setting before them the real cause of a war, the nature of which they saw and felt. The Catalans too

*First success of O'Donnell.*

*Desertion from the French army.*

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had learnt the good policy of distinguishing between the French and the foreigners in the French army, treating the latter, when they were taken, with kindness, as men who had been brought against them by compulsion. The effect of this system, and of the proclamations, was such as greatly to alarm the enemy. They lost in this manner more than 6000 men, wretched as the service was to which the men went over. It was not possible for them to take any effectual means for checking this evil, when such constant opportunities were offered in the desultory warfare which they were compelled to carry on.

*Want of  
concert be-  
tween the  
provinces.*

Had the Spanish army been even in a tolerable condition, this cause must have produced the ruin of the French in Catalonia; but the deserters found that they were exchanging a bad service for a worse. The French troops, though by a policy not less ruinous than detestable, left to supply themselves as they could, were, even at the worst, better provided than the Spaniards in their best state. They had always the benefit of system, regularity, and order; while the Spaniards suffered as much from the confusion which insubordination and the total want of method occasioned, as from neglect on the part of the local authorities and the provincial government. Owing to these combined causes their armies were often in a state of destitution. Unanimous as Spain was in its feeling of indignant abhorrence at the

insolent usurpation which Buonaparte had attempted, it was divided against itself whenever provincial interests appeared to clash. Neither Catalonia nor Valencia would at this time make common cause with Arragon, although they were engaged with the same passionate feeling, for the same object, against the same enemy, and although their own safety was immediately involved in the fate of that kingdom. The Arragonese army consisted of about 13,000 men in three divisions, one of which was near Teruel, another near Tortosa, and the third on the line of the Cinca; the men were without pay, without arms, without clothing; the officers on a fourth part of their appointments. Twenty thousand men would eagerly have joined that army, if they could have been armed and fed; the people had given abundant proof of their zeal, and spirit, and devotion, and the army had done its duty: yet Valencia would spare them none of its own ample resources, and the Catalan government even stopped the supplies which were intended for Arragon. The Arragonese felt this the more indignantly, because, while Lazan was at their head, his rank and influence ensured some attention to his representations on their behalf; but Lazan, whether or not justly, had been arrested, as being implicated in the intrigues of Montijo and D. Francisco Palafox, and was kept a close prisoner in Peñiscola. The judge who officially inquired into his conduct declared that there was not the slightest proof



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against him ; and upon the overthrow of the Central Junta, Saavedra dispatched an order for his liberation ; but the Junta of Valencia, with that order in their hands, detained him in strict confinement.

*Neglect of  
the Valen-  
cian go-  
vernment.*

No province had as yet suffered so little as Valencia ; the people were proud of the spirit and signal success with which they had repelled Marshal Moncey from the walls of their capital ; their country was the most fertile and most populous part of Spain ; men were in abundance, wealth was not wanting, and there were more appearances of activity and preparation than were any where else to be seen. In every town and village militia and guerilla bands were formed ; about 50,000 were thus embodied, the greater part armed with fire-arms ; and besides these there were 11,000 troops of the line ; but with this force nothing was undertaken. Good service might have been rendered on one side by harassing the enemy's communications in La Mancha ; and scenes of more important action were open both in Arragon and Catalonia, . . . even on their own borders ; but the will, courage, and means were inefficient, for want of capacity in their leaders. They waited for the enemy upon their own ground, in hope and in confidence, but without foresight or system. General Doyle endeavoured to convince the provincial government that no time should be lost in fortifying the important points of Morella, Oropesa, and Murviedro. He inferred

from some of Suchet's movements an intention to establish himself in the latter place, which would have cut off the communication between Catalonia and the rest of Spain, and have given him command of the Huerta de Valencia, and of the whole country to the very gates of Tortosa. But in the confidence and confusion which prevailed alike in the people and in the officers and the rulers, nothing was done; and so far were they from storing Tarragona, and forming a depôt at Peñiscola, as the importance of the crisis required, that Tortosa itself had not at this time provisions for a week's consumption. They relied upon the defence of their frontier, upon their own numbers and resources, upon fortune and Providence; for themselves, they were ready to meet the danger manfully whenever it should come, . . . but as for any system of defence, to fortune and Providence that seemed to be left.

The Valencians were in this state when the half-armed, half-clothed, half-hungered Arragonese, with whom their abundant means ought to have been shared, were dispersed, and the frontier in consequence was left open. General Caro determined to march upon Teruel, which the French had entered, but the movements of an active enemy soon compelled him to change this determination. One division of Suchet's army advanced from Alcañiz upon Morella; no means had been taken for strengthening that important point, the Valencians therefore fell

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*The force  
on the Va-  
lencian  
frontier  
dispersed.*

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back from thence, and from San Mateo also, and the enemy, without experiencing any opposition, proceeded by Burriol with all speed toward Murviedro. Meantime Suchet with the other division advanced upon the same point by way of Alventosa; there he encountered a brave resistance from the vanguard of Caro's army, and after a contest, which lasted nearly the whole day, was repulsed. The Spanish commander, expecting a renewal of the attack, requested a reinforcement from Segorbe; he was informed in reply, that General Caro had ordered the troops to fall back upon the capital. This disheartened men who were too prone to interpret an order for retreating as a signal for flight; they dispersed upon the next attack, leaving the artillery upon the ground; Segorbe was entered in pursuit, and Suchet, having sacked that place, effected a junction with the other division of his army at Murviedro.

*Suchet advances  
against  
Valencia.  
March 6.*

His corps consisted of about 12,000 men, with thirty field-pieces; a force manifestly insufficient for its object, if he had not counted upon the success of his machinations in the capital. From thence he advanced to the Puig, and having fixed his head-quarters on the spot where King Jayme el Conquistador had encamped when he undertook the conquest of Valencia, he addressed a letter to the Captain General Caro, saying, that he came not to make war upon the happy capital of the finest kingdom in Spain, nor to lay waste the delicious

country which surrounded it, but to offer protection and peace, such as Jaen, and Granada, and Cordoba, and Seville were enjoying. Andalusia had submitted; the army, having discharged its duty, had entered into the service of King Joseph Napoleon; and the militia, consisting of men enlisted by force, and under the penalty of death if they refused, had been dismissed. Religion was respected, justice observed, private property untouched; and General Caro was now invited to open the gates of Valencia, that the French might enter, and he might deserve the blessings of his country. Wherefore should he prolong a contest, the issue of which the Spaniards themselves could now no longer consider doubtful? They had done enough to prove their courage, and it was time that their sufferings should have an end. The Captain General's answer contained some stinging truths, and some remarkable falsehoods. It contrasted the professions of General Suchet with his actual conduct; and it assured him that the French had been completely defeated between Puerto Real and the Isle of Leon, that they had evacuated Seville in consequence, and were in full retreat toward the Sierra Morena. Authentic intelligence was so irregularly communicated, and the most extravagant reports so eagerly propagated and so readily believed, that it is very possible the Captain General of Valencia believed the incredible statement which he advanced. Suchet addressed a summons

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also to the inhabitants of Valencia, calling upon them as proprietors and parents to consult their own interest and their duty, by preserving their beautiful and flourishing city from the calamities of war. They returned for answer, that they were prepared to sacrifice every thing in the defence of their just cause; that having defeated Moncey in a similar attempt, they had good reason now to hope for the same success; and that it was for his Excellency, who so humanely deprecated the effusion of blood, to consider whether the best method of avoiding that evil was not to abstain from an attack?

*He retreats  
from Va-  
lencia.*

Suchet, in fact, had no intention of making one. It was, however, expected by the Valencians; and in that expectation the superior Junta, by Caro's advice, had removed to St. Felipe, a city to which it seems strange that its old name of Xativa should not have been at this time restored. There they were to exert themselves for supplying the capital and annoying the invaders, a military Junta being appointed meantime within the city, to dispose of the peasantry who had flocked thither, and to direct the labours of a willing people. A former Junta had been assembled after the dispersion at Alventosa, and in the course of the ensuing night every member had been arrested upon a charge of treason. An edict also was passed, confiscating the property of all who had fled from the city at this time, their absence being interpreted as proof either of cowardice

or of treachery. Such severity was not without cause. Relying upon their intelligence in the city, the van of the French army entered the suburb of Murviedro, and occupied the College of Pius V. the Royal Palace, and the Zaidia, all which are without the walls on the farther bank of the Turia. From the palace they fired upon the bridge; and they exasperated, if it were possible to exasperate, the hatred of the Spaniards, by exposing the images which they had taken from the churches on their march and in the suburbs to the fire of the city, having stript some of their taudry attire, and dressed up others in regimentals. But finding their hopes fail, and not being in sufficient force to venture upon an attack, they decamped during the night of the 11th, retreating with such celerity, that they abandoned great part of their plunder.

The Valencians imputed their deliverance on this occasion to their Patroness and Generalissima, the Virgin, under her invocation of Maria Santissima de los Desamparados, and to the Saints who were natives of Valencia. A deliverance it was; for a plan had actually been formed to assassinate the Captain General, and proclamations in favour of King Joseph and his French allies were found upon the chief mover of this treason, Colonel Baron de Pozo blanco. This person, who appears to have been a revolutionary fanatic, suffered under the hangman; his head was exposed upon a stake

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*A conspiracy discovered in that city.*

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in the market-place, with an inscription under it, announcing his crime, and charging him also with belonging to the sect of the illuminated Egyptian freemasons, which was said to be extending itself from Madrid into La Mancha, Murcia, and Valencia, and to have converted the different appellations of the Virgin into distinctive names for its own organization.

*The French  
boast of suc-  
cess.*

Suchet's expedition was not made without loss ; some of his garrisons and smaller parties were cut off by the Arragonese troops in his rear, under D. Pedro Villacampa. The Castle of Benasque had been taken before he marched against Valencia, and that capture completed his military possession of the north of Arragon ; but the people, when deprived of their fortresses, found fastnesses in their mountains, and waged from thence a wearying and wasting war against their oppressors ; and Mina's prisoners were escorted from the frontier of Navarre to Lerida, through a country of which the French called and fancied themselves masters. This desultory warfare was carried on in Catalonia also with no less skill than success. Augereau had supposed, that after the reduction of Gerona little more was necessary for the complete subjugation of the province ; he boasted of a victory in the plain of Vich, the most glorious, it was said, which the French had yet obtained, wherein O'Donnell had lost 7000 men, with the whole of his baggage, and after which he could find no place of safety till he had taken refuge

under the walls of Tarragona. Souham in like manner proclaimed that the famous Rovira had fled before him, notwithstanding his vaunts of the incursions, robberies, and assassinations upon which he prided himself. It was presently seen with what little foundation the invaders boasted of these triumphs.

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O'Donnell's movements were not in consequence of a defeat. Having experienced the superiority which the enemy's discipline gave them in the management of large bodies, he had immediate recourse to that system of warfare, in which enterprise, celerity, and the ardour of the soldiers, are of more avail than tactics. Therefore he retreated rapidly from Moya to Terrasa, leaving Manresa uncovered: the inhabitants of that city forsook it on the approach of the French; and O'Donnell continuing to lead the invaders on, fell back, first to Villa-franca del Panades, then to Torre-dembarra, finally under the walls of Tarragona, executing these movements in good order, and without loss. The enemy, in pursuit, as they believed, of a flying army, occupied Manresa with 1500 men, left 900 in Villa-franca, and proceeded till they also came in sight of Tarragona. One division occupied Vendrell, and extended to Arco de Barra, upon the high road to Barcelona; but in a few days this division joined the main body, which was at Coll de Santa Cristina, and they immediately advanced towards Valls. O'Donnell, profiting by this

*O'Donnell's successful operations.*

*March 16.*

*March 28.*



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 XXX. against Villa-franca ; Caro proceeded by forced  
 1810. marches, and surprised the enemy on the fol-  
 March. lowing morning; between 200 and 300 were  
 March 30. killed, and 640 made prisoners, not a man  
 escaping. Caro himself was wounded; the  
 command of his detachment devolved upon  
 Brigadier D. Gervasio Gasca, and they pro-  
 ceeded toward Manresa, to attack the enemy,  
 who occupied that town.

A body of 500 or 600 had already been sent  
 to reinforce the French in Manresa, and had  
 effected their junction, though not without the  
 loss of two carts of ammunition, and forty  
 killed, in an action with a party of somatenes  
 and of expatriates, as those Spaniards were  
 called whose homes were occupied by the ene-  
 my. Augereau no sooner heard of the loss in  
 Villa-franca, than, apprehending a similar attack  
 upon Manresa, he ordered a further reinforce-  
 ment of 1200 men from Barcelona, to proceed thi-  
 ther with the utmost celerity. Gasca, receiving  
 timely intelligence of their movement, instead  
 of proceeding upon Manresa, marched to inter-  
 cept this column, and fell in with it between  
 Esparraguera and Abrera; 400 were left upon  
 the field, 500 made prisoners, and the remainder  
 fled toward Barcelona, not more than 200  
 reaching that city. The Spaniards, after this  
 second success, prepared to execute their pro-  
 jected attack upon the enemy in Manresa, and  
 the Marquis de Campoverde took the command

April 3.

for this purpose: but the men had exerted themselves too much in forced marches and in action to perform a third enterprise with the same celerity as the two former; and on the night before the attack should have been made, Schwartz, who headed the French detachment, evacuated the town, and took the road to Barcelona by Santa Clara, Barata, and Marieta. He began his retreat at eleven on the night of the 4th. Brigadier D. Francisco Milans, who was stationed at St. Fructuos, passing the night under arms, to be ready for the attack at seven on the following morning, was apprised of the enemy's retreat between four and five, and dispatched the corps of expatriates, under Rovira, in pursuit, while the rest of the division followed as fast as possible. Rovira, whom the French had lately reviled as a wretch who was flying before them, passing in two hours over a distance which was the ordinary journey of four, in their pursuit, overtook them at Hostalet, and attacked them with his usual intrepidity. Schwartz, whose force consisted of 1500 men, formed them into a column, and continued to retreat, fighting as he went. Rovira, however, so impeded his movements, that he gave time for Milans to come up with him near Sabadell; the Spaniards then charged with the bayonet; 500 of the French fell, 300 were made prisoners; Schwartz himself was wounded, and owed his life to the swiftness of his horse.

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Some of the French, after having surrendered, were said to have fired upon the Spaniards, and this was assigned as the cause why the number of the slain exceeded that of the prisoners.

The amount of the killed and taken in these actions falls far short of the sum of the French loss; for the desertion was very great, every defeat giving the Germans, who were forced into their wicked service, an opportunity of escaping from it. The whole loss which they sustained from these well-planned enterprises was not less than 5000. O'Donnell hoped that he should now be enabled to relieve Hostalrich; but the main body of the French returning toward Barcelona from Reus, which they had taken possession of a few days before, compelled Campoverde's division to fall back, and thus prevented the attempt. In Catalonia, indeed, though more military talent and far more energy were displayed than in the other provinces, it was less a war of armies than of the people against a great military force. Wherever the French moved in large bodies, the Catalans could not resist them, or resisted in vain; in general actions and in sieges, the enemy were sure to be successful; the French, therefore, and they in this country who would have had us abandon the Peninsula to their mercy, concluded that the party which won battles, and captured fortresses, must necessarily soon become masters of the country; and they reasoned

thus, because they never took into their calculation the national character, the natural strength of Spain, and the moral strength of man.

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*Siege of  
Hostalrich.*

The effect of that moral power was shown not less admirably at Hostalrich than it had been at Zaragoza and Gerona, though the three sieges differed from each other in all their circumstances. The little town of Hostalrich was not included within the works, and the fortress contained no other inhabitants than its garrison. The bombardment began on the 20th of February. The adjutant, D. Jose Antonio Roca, was writing a dispatch for the governor to the commander-in-chief, when a shell burst so near them, that one of the fragments entered the room and swept away every thing from off the table : Roca picked up his paper, and, remarking that the sand which it carried with it might save him the trouble of telling the general they were bombarded, continued his dispatch. A private soldier, who went out of the works for water, received a musket-ball in his groin as he was returning ; he laid one hand upon the wound, and carrying in the pitcher steadily with the other, met his serjeant, to whom he delivered it ; then groping in the wound for the ball, which probably had not gone deep, he pulled it out with his fingers, and gave it to the serjeant, saying, “ I deposit this ball in your hands ; keep it for me, and as soon as I am cured, this very bullet shall revenge me upon the first Frenchman at whom I can get a shot.” And as he went

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to the hospital he charged his comrades, in case he should not live to take vengeance for himself, that they would take it for him. Such was the spirit with which Hostalrich was defended. “Let every circumstance of the siege be made known!” said this brave garrison; “if we are successful, the detail will give hope, and confidence, and joy to every true patriot; if we are unfortunate, it will excite a different feeling, but it will never produce shame or dismay.”

Verdier, who now commanded the besieging force, addressed a new summons to the governor at the time of O'Donnell's retreat to Tarragona, representing that movement as the consequence of a total defeat. “The wreck of the Spanish army,” he said, “was seeking a moment's shelter in Tarragona and Tortosa, vigorously pursued by Augereau in person, who would immediately commence the siege of both places. The siege of Lerida was already far advanced, and its fall inevitable. Hostalrich was a fort of no other use than as it interrupted the communication between Gerona and Barcelona; and this purpose it no longer effected, the French having made a new road, and communicating freely between those cities. The object, therefore, for defending it, no longer existed; and longer resistance, instead of adding to the governor's glory, would be called a vain obstinacy, draw upon him the reproaches of posterity, and make him responsible for the blood which should be shed.” Considering these circumstances, the

French general summoned him to surrender, and offered him the honours of war. The Marshal Duke of Castiglione, Augereau, he added, revoking his former declaration, had authorized him to propose these terms. "You will do well, sir," he continued, "to accept them with glory; if you delay, they will without doubt be refused to you; and you will then be obliged to suffer conditions, which, however rigorous they may appear, are dictated by justice, seeing that a protracted resistance is neither justified by honour nor by reason." Estrada replied, by simply referring him to his former determination, and to the conduct of the garrison.

The situation of the fortress, upon a craggy height, secured it against an assault, while there were any resolute men to defend it. The bombardment continued till every building within the walls had been destroyed, except a casemate, which served as an hospital, and was only large enough to hold one-and-twenty beds; the remainder of the sick and wounded were secured in a mine, and the garrison also had their quarters under ground. Supplies had been introduced about the middle of the siege; all other attempts had been defeated, and would have been of no avail at length had they succeeded, because the cisterns were destroyed. Estrada had the example of O'Donnell's retreat from Gerona before him, and determined to make his way through the enemy's lines, rather than capitulate. This he concerted with O'Donnell,

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who, for the purpose of deceiving the besiegers, ordered some vessels to approach Arenys de Mar, the nearest part of the coast, sent one detachment to call off their attention on the side of Orsaviña and Monnegre, and another on the southern skirts of Monseny, toward Breda. Augereau, who had come to witness the capture of a fortress which had resisted him for four months, sent in a last summons on the evening of the 11th of May, offering the same terms which had been granted to Gerona; he allowed the governor two hours for consideration, and declared, that if the fort was not then delivered up, the whole of the garrison should be put to the sword. Estrada laid this before his officers, and with one consent they returned for answer, that they thanked the Marshal for thinking them worthy of being thus named with Gerona, but that they were not yet in a condition which should make them yield. On the following morning, the men, to their great joy, were informed of the resolution which had been taken.

*Retreat of  
the garrison.*

The French expected such an attempt, and judged, from the stir which they beheld in the fort, that it would be made in the ensuing night. That evening, therefore, they strengthened their post at Tordera on the right, thinking, as the men themselves did, that the governor would make for Arenys de Mar, where the ships were awaiting him. At ten, the garrison descended the glacis on the side of the high road of St. Celoni, and crossed the road and the space be-

tween the fort and the heights of Masanas. It was broad moonlight. Two advanced parties, to the right and left, fell upon the enemy's picquets with the bayonet; those, however, who escaped gave the alarm; but the garrison had gained the start, ascended to St. Jacinto, and hastened toward St. Feliu de Buxaleu. A league from Hostalrich they fell in with an enemy's encampment, and routed them; this gave the alarm to another body of 2000 French, whose station was near, on the road to Arbucias; but they were received so resolutely, that they soon gave over the pursuit. Thus all was effected which could be done by skill and courage; one division lost its way, and many of the men dropt on the road, their strength failing them on this great exertion, from the want of rest and food, which they had long endured. Among them was the noble Julian de Estrada, who thus fell into the hands of the enemy: this was a heavier loss to his country than that of the fortress which he had defended so well; for in the course of the war, Catalonia had but too much cause bitterly to regret the loss of such men as Estrada and Alvarez. Five hundred men reached Vich in safety on the following day, 132 joined them on the next, being part of the battalion of Gerona, who had lost their way and fallen in with the enemy; stragglers continually came in, and on the evening of that day, the number who had accomplished their retreat

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amounted to 800, though the French asserted, that every man was either killed or taken.

In such an enterprise, it was impossible to bring off the sick and wounded; the comptroller of the hospital, D. Manuel Miguel Mellado, remained with them to go through the form of delivering up the ruins, and provide for their safety. Such of the invalids as were best able mounted guard, the gates were closed, and the drawbridges raised; and in this state Mellado anxiously waited for what might happen. Half an hour before midnight, a brisk fire of musketry was poured in upon the flanks of the ravelin, and of St. Francisco. Mellado called out to the enemy to cease firing, for the fort was theirs; and he requested them to wait till the morning, that he might deliver a letter from the governor to the French general. They replied, they would suffer no delay, the gates must instantly be opened; otherwise, they had ladders, and would enter and put every man to the sword. He, however, told them he would not open the gates till he had seen their general; upon this they renewed their fire, setting up a loud shout like men who were about to obtain possession of their prey. Mellado hastened to the bulwark of St. Barbara, where he apprehended the escalade would be made, and there he perceived that the enemy, who had found a rope-ladder in the covered way, were endeavouring to grapple the drawbridge with it; but, either

from the weight of the rope, which rendered it difficult to be thrown, or because the irons were not sufficiently sharp to lay hold, their attempts were frustrated. This Mellado could not foresee; and knowing that no time was to be lost, he hastened out through a covered way to the nearest work of the enemy, and called out to the commandant, requesting him to stop the assault, and send him to the general, that he might deliver the governor's letter; the party who were flanking the ravelin, no sooner heard his voice than they fired a volley towards it; upon which, without waiting for an answer, he hastened to the nearest sentinel of the French, and the captain of the guard conducted him to the French commandant in the town; whom he entreated to have compassion upon the wounded in the fort, and call off the assailants. This officer was a man of humanity, and instantly sent off to suspend the assault, while Mellado, who was now delivered from his fears for his poor defenceless countrymen, was escorted to the general. In the morning the gates were opened to the enemy. The French soldiers gave sufficient proof how little mercy the wounded would have found at their hands, had they been under no control, for they stript the clothes and blankets from the beds of these helpless men. Mazzachelli gave orders that they should be conveyed to Gerona; and Mellado, having seen this performed, and perceiving that it was intended to detain him and his as-

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*Las Medas  
and Lerida  
surrendered.*

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sistants as prisoners, took the first opportunity of making his escape.

At the very time when the garrison of Hostalrich, after a four months' defence, and a bombardment, during which between three and four thousand shells were thrown into the place, thus gallantly effected their retreat, the Catalans suffered another loss. The islands and fortress of Las Medas, which were of material importance from their position on the coast, were surprised by a party of Neapolitan infantry, and given up in a manner which the French imputed to cowardice, though, by their own account, treason, on the part of the commander, was the only intelligible cause of the surrender. Lerida also was rather betrayed than yielded by Garcia Conde. The town was entered by assault: and the castle, where the works were uninjured, and which, under Alvarez or Estrada, might have rivalled Gerona, was surrendered the next day. For this there was no excuse; O'Donnell's last orders to the governor had been, that if the city should be taken, he was to defend the fortresses; and if no such orders had been given, his duty required him to hold out to the last extremity. The commander-in-chief, who rewarded the defenders of Hostalrich with a medal, stigmatized this conduct as it deserved; but he reminded the Catalans, that Tarragona, Tortosa, Cardona, Berga, Seu de Urgel, Coll de Ballaguer, and Mequinenza, still remained as bulwarks of the principality; that

if all these were lost, there would be their inaccessible mountains; and that when they began the war, they had neither army nor fortresses, for all their fortified places had been dismantled. A wound which he had received during the siege of Gerona, and which had never been healed, because he never allowed himself rest enough from the incessant and anxious activity of his situation, became now so threatening, that he was constrained for a while to withdraw from the command. Augereau also, about the same time, was recalled. His success in sieges did not expiate, in Buonaparte's eyes, for the loss in men and reputation which he had sustained from an enemy who were now become as wary as they were active and enterprising. Marshal Macdonald, Duke of Tarento, succeeded him. The plunder of Barcelona was sent into France under Augereau's escort; and a number of commercial adventurers from that country, who, being deceived by the French official accounts, had supposed that Spain was actually subdued, and gone thither with the intent of forming establishments, gladly seized the first opportunity of returning in safety.

If the war was carried on by the Catalans with an unwearied and unremitting energy which was not displayed in other parts of Spain, it was not wholly owing to that enterprising and unconquerable spirit by which they have always been characterized, but in some degree to the natural strength of the province, and still more

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*Augereau  
superseded  
by Marshal  
Macdonald.*

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to the advantage which they derived from having many places in their possession which could not be reduced without a regular siege. Throughout Spain there existed the same feeling of indignation against the invaders, . . but where the country, the villages, and the towns were alike open, there was not the same possibility of resistance; plains could not be defended by peasantry; nor could the contest be maintained by large bodies against a superior enemy, when there were neither fortified towns nor natural fastnesses on which they could retire. In such parts the war was carried on by guerilla parties, who made incursions from the mountainous districts into the plains, and whenever it was necessary to disperse, found friends every where. Wherever the French were nominally masters of the country, the guerillas harassed their communication, cut off their small parties, and diminished their numbers by a mode of warfare as disheartening to the enemy as it was consuming and inglorious; while in the stronger parts of the kingdom, such as Asturias, and the province of Cuenca, and the mountains of Ronda, the inhabitants perseveringly defended their native soil.

*Fort Matagorda taken by the French.*

Cadiz, however, was the point whereon all eyes were at this time turned, in expectation of great events. Victor had been left to command the siege, if siege it may be called. The French occupied the shore of the bay, fortified their own position, and endeavoured to annoy the

shipping and the town; a regular attack upon the isle was too perilous for them to attempt. Fort Matagorda was the only point from which it was thought possible that they could injure the town: it had been built for the defence of the arsenal, opposite to the broadest part of that tongue of land which connects Cadiz with the Isle of Leon. From thence it was apprehended they might with the largest land mortars throw shells to the gates of the city; Ormond indeed had planted his cannon there, in the fruitless attempt upon Cadiz in Queen Anne's reign. The fort, like the other land-works, had been dismantled upon their approach; but when it was seen that they were beginning to reconstruct it, it was deemed advisable that they should be dispossessed, and that the post should be maintained as long as possible against them. Accordingly they were compelled to abandon it, and the hasty works which could be re-erected were garrisoned by a party of British soldiers and seamen under Captain Maclean. They defended it for nearly two months, till it was reduced to a heap of ruins; and having lost in the last two days sixteen killed and fifty-seven wounded, were brought off by the boats of the British squadron, under the fire of the enemy's batteries, with little loss. The manner in which this weak fort was defended taught the French what they might expect if they should attempt the Isle of Leon, for the defence of which a formidable line of works behind the Santi Pietri

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had now been executed under the direction of General Sir Thomas Graham, who had arrived from England to command the auxiliary forces there. These works extended to the ocean on the right, and on the left occupied the Caraccas as an advanced post. The French also were more intent upon securing themselves in their cantonments than upon annoying the Spaniards. They fortified Puerto Real, Puerto Santa Maria, and Chiclana, formed entrenched camps between these places, and strengthened the Trocadero, where they established batteries from whence to bombard the town. Having presently found the inefficiency of the field artillery, which was all that they had brought with them, they fished up the guns from the French and Spanish ships which had been wrecked upon that coast after the battle of Trafalgar. Most of the heavy pieces with which two-and-twenty batteries were now mounted were recovered in this manner from the sea.

*Storm at  
Cadix.*

The French, though disappointed in their main object here by Alburquerque's sagacity, and the prompt assistance of the British forces, were in high spirits. They were in a fine country; their quarters were at once commodious and secure; and a few weeks after their arrival the winds and waves threw into their possession no inconsiderable booty. For during a tremendous gale, which continued four days with unabated violence, three line of battle ships, one frigate, and about forty merchantmen were

driven\* to the side of the bay which they occupied, and went on shore at the height of the spring side. The men were taken out by the boats of the British squadron, and the ships were set on fire by the enemy's red-hot shot; but no small part of the lading fell into their hands. During the tempest the French on board the prison ships could not receive their supplies of provisions and water from the shore; their signals of distress were disregarded by the Spaniards; and if the British Admiral had not sent his boats to their relief as soon as the gale abated, very many more of these miserable men than actually perished must have fallen victims, the Spaniards being in no haste to encounter the swell for the sake of enemies whom they seem to have considered as out of the pale of humanity. In the case of these prisoners, indeed, they had cast off all compassion, and the obduracy of the national character was fully manifested towards them, the negligence of the government being in this instance hardly less criminal than the avarice

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*Cruel usage  
of the  
French pri-  
soners in  
the bay.*

\* Some days after the storm the boats of the *Triumph* picked up about thirty tons of quicksilver, in leathern bags of fifty pounds each, which were cast on shore from the wreck. They were stowed below in the store-rooms and after-hold, and the bags having been thoroughly soaked in the sea, decayed and burst before the danger was perceived. As much of the quicksilver as possible was collected, but it insinuated itself every where, and not less than ten tons

weight was supposed to have got between the timbers, which could only be cleared by docking the ship and removing a plank at the lowest part near the keel. The provisions were spoilt; two or three hundred of the crew were so severely affected, that it was necessary to remove them immediately, many of them being in a state which left little chance of recovery; and the ship was sent to Gibraltar to have all her stores taken out, and undergo a thorough clearance.



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May 15.

*Escape of  
two prison  
ships.*

and brutality of those whom it employed. Admiral Pickmore perceiving with how little care the pontoons were secured, proposed to the Spanish Admiral that chains should be used as bridles to their cables; application was made to the Admiral in command at the Caraccas; they were promised from time to time, but never sent; and, as the British Commander had foreseen, the prisoners in the Castilla, nearly 700 in number, and mostly officers, cut the cable one night, when wind and tide were in their favour, and hoisting a sail which they had made from their hammocks, ran for the opposite coast. English boats were presently sent after them, while it was doubted whether the vessel had not by accident parted from her anchor; but when they reached her it was impossible to board, the pontoon being light, her ports all down, no steps on the side, nor ropes over it, and the French prepared, not only with musketry, but with cannon-ball of twenty-four and thirty-six pounders, which had been used for ballast in the vessel: two hundred men were stationed to throw these by hand, and the boats were presently disabled when such missiles were showered upon them. Fort Puntales and the gun and mortar boats opened their fire upon the pontoon, the vessel was burnt, but the fugitives, with little loss, effected their escape\*.

\* A minute and interesting account of this escape was published at Lausanne, 1817, with this title, *Relation du Séjour des Prisonniers de Guerre Français et*

*Suisses sur le Ponton la Castille, dans la Baie de Cadix, et de leur Evasion le 15 May, 1810. Par L. Chapuis, de Lausanne, Chirurgien major.*

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A week later the French had nearly obtained possession of a rich prize. The *S. Elmo*, line of battle ship, with 250,000*l.* on board, in attempting to work out of the bay, got under their battery of *S. Catalina*. She was saved by the exertions of the officers and men in all the boats of the British squadron. Having turned her head round, the greater part of them went on board, and fought her guns with good effect till out of the enemy's reach. The French had better fortune with the *Argonauta* pontoon; the prisoners on board that vessel, about six hundred in number, followed the example of their comrades in the *Castilla*; a third of these were killed by the fire which was kept up upon them; the remainder escaped from the burning hulk. But though the Spaniards had taken no precautions for rendering such attempts impracticable, they felt how dangerous it was to keep so large a body of prisoners in the bay while a French army was in possession of the shores. Two ships of the line were at this time under orders to carry part of them to the Canaries; and more would have been sent to Majorca and Minorca, whither 5000 had been transported in the preceding year, if the inhabitants had not at this crisis been in a state of excitement, which would have rendered a farther importation dangerous both to the prisoners themselves and to the government. Serious disturbances had broken out in both islands, not from any spirit of disaffection, but from distress, and indignation that so

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May.*Insurrec-  
tion against  
the prison-  
ers at Ma-  
jorca.*

many of these unhappy persons should be cast among them, and no adequate means provided for their subsistence. The Minorcans were less likely to be patient under such misgovernment than any other Spaniards, remembering the prosperity and good order which they had enjoyed while their island was in possession of the English: with them, however, the ebullition of popular feeling past harmlessly off, while Majorca became the scene of a disgraceful and dreadful tragedy. Some fugitives landed at Palma from those parts of the south which had lately fallen under the French yoke; they brought horrible tales concerning the invasion of Andalusia and the conduct of the invaders; and the people, excited by these horrors, cried out for vengeance upon the prisoners. Troops were called out to protect these unfortunate men, but the soldiers would not act against their countrymen; and when the commander, General Reding, as the only means of saving the prisoners, consented that they should be sent to the desert island of Cabrera, many were butchered in his presence, in spite of his entreaties and exertions, and many thrown into the sea, before the embarkation could be effected; nor could it have been effected, if the soldiers had not at length been provoked to fire upon the mob.

*Prisoners  
sent to Ca-  
brera.*

Five thousand at first, and afterwards half as many more, were landed upon Cabrera, a rocky island about fifteen miles in circumference, with no other inhabitants than a handful of soldiers,

who were stationed there to prevent the Barbary corsairs from making it a place of rendezvous. A few tents were provided for the superior officers, the remainder were left to shelter themselves as they could. There was but one spring on the island, and in summer this was dry: they discovered some old wells, which had been filled up, and which, when cleared, yielded bad water, and very little of it. The supplies from Palma were sent so irregularly, sometimes owing to the weather, but far more frequently to inhuman negligence, that scores and hundreds of these miserable creatures died of hunger and thirst; many were in a state of complete nakedness, when in mere humanity clothing was sent them by the British commander in the Mediterranean: and at other times they were kept alive by barrels of biscuit and of meat which the English ships threw overboard for them, to be cast on shore. But in the third year of their abode, the captain of a Spanish frigate, whose name ought to have been recorded, remonstrated so effectually upon the manner of their treatment, that from that time they were regularly supplied with food. He gave them potatoes and cabbage and tobacco seed, from which they raised sufficient for their consumption; and having by persevering labour, without any other tools than a single knife, broken six feet into a rock, on the surface of which there was appearance enough of moisture to excite their hopes, they obtained a sup-

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May.*Their inhuman treatment there.**Mémoires d'un Officier Français, Prisonnier en Espagne, 255, 287.*

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See vol. i.  
p. 501.

M. Soult's  
edict.

May 9.

See vol. iii.  
p. 446.

ply of water. Some of them used the skulls of their own dead, for want of other vessels, to contain it; . . and others, with no such excuse of necessity, manufactured buttons from their bones! About 1500 entered the Spanish service rather than endure a banishment to which no end could be foreseen; and some 500, chiefly officers, were in compassion removed to England. At the end of the war not more than 2000 remained in Cabrera, nearly half of those who had been landed there having sunk under their sufferings. The Spaniards departed from the straight path of probity when they broke the terms of capitulation which had been granted at Baylen. They committed that breach of faith in deference to popular outcry, and to the sophistry of one who soon proved himself a traitor, . . the most odious of all those men whom the Revolution either found wicked or made so: and in the subsequent treatment of the prisoners humanity was as little regarded, as honour had been in detaining them. Many and grievous were the errors which the Spaniards committed in the course of the war; but this is the only part of its history which will be remembered for them as a national reproach.

On the other hand, the French had as yet abated nothing of that insolent cruelty with which they began the contest, supposing that they could intimidate the Spanish nation. Soult, who had recommended that all the commanding officers employed in Spain should be *impassible*,

..incapable of any feeling by which they might even possibly be moved to compunction, .. issued at this time an edict not less extraordinary than Kellermann's. After various enactments, some of which were as impracticable as they were rigorous, imposing penalties upon the inhabitants of those districts in which the patriotic parties should commit any crimes, as this Frenchman was pleased to denominate their hostilities against the invaders of their country; he pronounced, "that there was no Spanish army, except that of his Catholic Majesty, King Joseph Napoleon; all parties, therefore, which existed in the provinces, whatever might be their number, and whoever might be their commander, should be treated as banditti, who had no other object than robbery and murder; and all the individuals of such parties who might be taken in arms should be immediately condemned and shot, and their bodies exposed along the highways." When the Regency found that this decree was actually carried into effect, they reprinted it, with a counter decree by its side, in French and Spanish, declaring anew, "that every Spaniard capable of bearing arms was in these times a soldier; that for every one who should be murdered by the French, in consequence of the edict of the ferocious Soult, who called himself Duke of Dalmatia, the three first Frenchmen taken in arms should infallibly be hanged; three for every house which the enemy burnt in their devastating system, and three for

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*Counter  
edict of the  
Regency.  
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every person who should perish in the fire.”  
Soult himself they declared unworthy of the protection of the law of nations, while his decree remained unrepealed. They gave orders, that if he were taken, he should be punished as a robber; and they took measures for circulating both decrees throughout Europe, to the end that all persons might be informed of the atrocious conduct of these enemies of the human race; and that those inhabitants of the countries which were in alliance with France, or, more truly, which were enslaved by her, who were unhappy enough to have children, or kinsmen, or friends serving in the French armies in Spain, might see the fate prepared for them by the barbarity of a monster, who thought by such means to subdue a free and noble nation.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

ASTORGA TAKEN BY THE FRENCH. SIEGE AND  
FALL OF CIUDAD RODRIGO.

HOSTILITIES were carried on before Cadiz <sup>1810.</sup> with equal languor on both sides, the French <sup>*Inactivity before Cadiz.*</sup> making no attempt on the Isle of Leon, and the Spaniards none for breaking up the land-blockade. On the enemy's part this inaction was occasioned by their knowledge of the strength of the works; on that of the Spaniards by want of energy in the government, and want of spirit in the people of Cadiz. The Regency, immediately upon their appointment, had sent for <sup>*The Regency send for Cuesta.*</sup> Cuesta to reside either in the city or the isle, that they might profit by his advice, regarding him, they said, as the main pillar of the country: they expressed their deep sorrow for some outrages which had been committed against his venerable age, and their determination to inflict exemplary punishment upon the offenders: they ordered that part of his appointments should forthwith be paid, and promised the whole arrears as soon as it should be possible to discharge them. The time, however, for Cuesta's services, either in the field or the council, was past; and the old General employed his latter days in composing a vindictive attack



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upon the fallen Junta, which called forth on their part a complete justification of their conduct towards him. On that score they had nothing wherewith to reproach themselves; but they must have felt some self-condemnation in reflecting that the two generals, who in the hour of extreme danger had acted with promptitude and success, were the men in whom they had least confided. Alburquerque they had regarded with jealousy, and Romana they had deprived of his command in deference to the deputies of Asturias.

*Badajoz secured by Romana.*

The service which Romana had rendered at that crisis was only of less importance than the preservation of the Isle of Leon. He had secured Badajoz when a corps of 12,000 men from Seville thought to have obtained possession of it by a coup-de-main: some Portugeze had come to his assistance, and their artillery-men distinguished themselves when the enemy ventured to approach the walls. Baffled in this attempt, the French retired to Merida, Zafra, and S. Marta, where they were annoyed by the division of his army under D. Carlos O'Donnell, brother to the commander in Catalonia.

*The British take a position on the frontiers of Beira.*

Lord Wellington had nearly 9000 sick when his head-quarters were removed from Badajoz; but when, in clear anticipation of the enemy's intentions, he took a position on the frontiers of Beira, they rapidly recovered strength in that salubrious country. On the side of Alentejo he knew that the invasion would not be at-

tempted; attempts in that quarter had always proved unsuccessful: if Badajoz and Elvas had been reduced, Lisbon was secured by the Tagus, and there is no other part of Portugal in which an army would suffer so much from disease, and from want of water; this indeed Loison had experienced. On the side of Galicia the French had so lately felt how difficult it was to retreat, that it was altogether unlikely they would risk the same danger again, even if it had not been necessary again to obtain possession of that province as a preliminary measure. It appeared certain, therefore, that the attempt would be made by way of Beira, the only remaining and most practicable route for an invading army. Their first step must be to besiege Ciudad Rodrigo. This, he knew, had been recommended by a council of war held in September at Salamanca; and its success, he then observed, would do more evil than the French could effect in any other way; for it would cut off the only communication of the Spanish government with the northern provinces, give the enemy the command of Castille, and probably draw after it the loss of Almeida. Looking, therefore, to Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida as the points of which the enemy must obtain possession before they could march either upon Lisbon or Porto, he chose a position in the segment of a circle, of which the convex part was opposed to the quarter from whence the invasion was expected. Guarda, Celorico, Pin-

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*See vol. ii.  
p. 181.*

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hel, and the west bank of the Coa, were its four main points ; the Coa, with its tributary streams, flowing in front of his line along the greater part of its extent. That river rises in the Sierra de Xalma, which is a part of the Serra da Gata, and enters Portugal by Folgoso; another stream, which is also regarded as its source, rises near Sabugal ; it receives many smaller rivers, and falls into the Douro near Villa Nova de Foscoa. Its waters are supposed to be excellent for dying wool and tempering steel, but unwholesome.

*Astorga  
summoned  
by the  
French.*

Before the French entered upon their operations in this quarter, they thought it necessary to obtain complete possession of Leon, that their communication might be open with Valladolid. They had been repulsed in an attempt upon Astorga, in the preceding September, by Santocildes, who remained as governor there. That city was surrounded with walls, which gave it an appearance of antiquity, not of strength. They had been erected many centuries ago, and were so massive, and at the same time considered as of so little consequence for purposes of defence, that the poor were permitted to dig holes in them which served for habitations. The garrison consisted of about 3000 men, of whom from 500 to 600 were on the hospital list. Some attempts had been made to render the city defensible, according to the system of modern warfare, by the enemy, after Buonaparte entered it in pursuit of Sir J. Moore ;

and when the Spaniards recovered it, they added to these works. Still the fortifications were such, that though the French might deem them sufficient against an armed peasantry, or a guerilla party, it was never expected that any resistance would be made there against a regular force. After the French had overrun Andalusia, and when they were proclaiming, that the brigands had been put to the sword, and the Napoleonic throne established in Cadiz, . . for this falsehood was in such phrase asserted in their Spanish gazettes, . . Loison, whose head-quarters were at Bañeza, the nearest town, wrote to the governor, telling him, that King Joseph had entered Seville amid the acclamations of the inhabitants ; that Andalusia had submitted ; the Junta was dissolved ; and almost all the people of Spain, awakened now to a sense of their true interest, had had recourse to the clemency of their sovereign, who received them like a father. He urged Santocildes to imitate so good an example, and appoint a place where they might meet and confer upon such terms as must needs persuade him to this wise and honourable course. Santocildes replied to this overture, that he knew his duty, and would do it.

On the 21st of March, Junot invested Astorga with 12,000 men, of whom about a tenth part were cavalry, by means of which he became master of the open country. The vigorous measures of Santocildes obstructed his operations so much, that a month elapsed before he

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*Siege of  
Astorga.*

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opened his batteries. They began on three sides at once, at daybreak on the 20th of April, and soon effected a breach on the north, by the Puerta de Hierro; but immediately behind the breach the Spaniards pulled down a house, the foundations of which served as a formidable trench; they kept up their fire during the night, and at eleven the following morning Junot once more summoned the governor to surrender, declaring that, if he held out two hours longer, the city should be stormed, and the garrison put to the sword. The governor having returned a becoming answer, the batteries renewed their fire; the bombardment was recommenced; the cathedral was set on fire, with many other houses, and a whole street in the suburbs; and the French, thinking to profit by the confusion, assaulted the breach: 2000 men were appointed for this service: great part perished before they could reach the wall; the remainder mounted the breach; the works within impeded them, a destructive fire was poured upon them, and after an hour and a half they were repulsed. At the same time the suburb was assaulted, and with the same success; the enemy being three times baffled in their attempts. Their loss this day amounted to 1500 men.

*Its surrender.*

Had the city been well stored, it would have cost the besiegers still dearer; but after this signal success, Santocildes found himself with only thirty round of cartridges remaining for

the men, and eight only for the artillery. Junot passed the night in making a covered way from the trenches to the foot of the breach, where he lodged a large body of picked men. Meantime a council of war was held ; the impossibility of resisting with advantage for want of ammunition was admitted ; some officers proposed that they should cut their way through the besiegers ; .. the strength of the enemy's cavalry was one impediment to this, but it was rejected on account of the inhabitants ; for Astorga was not like Hostalrich, where the garrison had only themselves to provide for ; and unless terms were made for the town's-people, what they might expect from such conquerors as Junot and Loison was but too well known. Fresh works of defence were thrown up within the breach while this deliberation was going on, that nothing might be omitted, and at daybreak a capitulation was proposed. They demanded and obtained the honours of war for themselves ; security for the inhabitants, both in person and property ; that the men should keep their knapsacks, and the officers their horses, swords, and baggage. This part of the capitulation was broken, and the officers were plundered as they left the town. Even Junot, however, returned Santocildes his sword, saying, that so brave a man ought not to be without one. In the course of the siege the enemy lost 2500 in killed alone ; so dearly was Astorga purchased. But the more gallant its resistance, the more was that misconduct to be

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regretted which had infected the provincial Juntas as strongly as the Central Government. Since July last Galicia had been entirely delivered from the enemy ; the population of that province, when the census of 1797 was taken, amounted to nearly a million and a half ; the people had shown their spirit, and if due exertions had been made on the part of the civil and military authorities, an army might have been formed there, capable not only of preserving Astorga, but of essentially co-operating with the British and Portugeze in the subsequent operations.

*Affair at  
Barba del  
Puerco.*

After this conquest, Junot, leaving a small garrison in Astorga, marched into Old Castille, where Ney had previously been joined by the corps of Loison, Regnier, and Kellermann. The campaign had already begun here. In the beginning of March the French army were upon the Tormes, with their advanced posts upon the Agueda. Lord Wellington was at Viseu, and his advanced posts, under General Craufurd, were upon the Agueda also, and between

*March 19.*

that river and the Coa. The first time that the British and French troops met after the battle of Talavera was in an affair of outposts, at Barba del Puerco : four companies of the 95th, under Lieutenant-Colonel Beckwith, were posted at that place ; the French had a strong party immediately opposite, on the other side the Agueda, in the village of St. Felices. The only bridge below Ciudad Rodrigo is between these

villages, and as the river at this season was swollen with rain, this was the only passage. The country is rocky and mountainous, and though the advanced sentries of both parties were within a few yards of the bridge, it was not expected that either would attempt to annoy the other; so great were the obstacles which the nature of the ground presented. The French, however, collected a brigade in St. Felices, and after night had closed marched 600 men toward the bridge. About midnight they were all assembled there, and made the advanced sentries prisoners; a picquet of eighty men, posted behind the rocks, immediately fired upon them and retreated in excellent order; they pushed on up the mountain, hoping to surprise the remainder of the men, but were presently repulsed. The loss was trifling on either side. Marshal Ney, however, ventured to assert, that the English had been routed at the point of the bayonet, and that their transports were ready at Porto and Lisbon.

The French had learnt at Vimeiro, and Co-

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*Massena  
appointed  
to the army  
of Portugal.*



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had been united, and under Massena, a general of higher rank than either. No general in the French service had enjoyed so high a reputation since Hoche, and Pichegru, and Moreau had disappeared. Buonaparte, in his first campaigns, called him, in his own inflated style, the favourite Child of Victory; and after the late Austrian war, created him Prince of Essling, because his skill and exertions had contributed mainly to the escape of the French from utter destruction at the battle of Aspern. He was appointed commander-in-chief of the provinces of the north of Spain, including the kingdoms of Old Castille, Leon, and Asturias; the provinces of St. Andero, Soria, Valladolid and Palencia, Toro, Zamora, Salamanca and Avila; the army under him was named the army of Portugal; and, as Soult had done before him, it is believed that he went to make the conquest of Portugal, expecting to be rewarded with its crown for his success.

*Ciudad  
Rodrigo.*

In the later wars between Spain and Portugal, the three cities where the Spaniards used to collect their armies before they invaded the enemy's country were Tuy, Ciudad Rodrigo, and Badajoz. Of these fortresses, Tuy, like Valença on the opposite frontier, is now of little strength or importance, Badajoz a strong place, Ciudad Rodrigo hardly to be ranked in the third order of fortresses. It was built some centuries ago, when the site was sufficiently convenient for a fortified town; but the situation

is bad; the works were old and imperfect, and it had other local disadvantages. It is commanded from many points; and one height, within 500 toises of the city, exceeds by about fifty yards the highest of its buildings. There were no bomb-proofs; and the suburbs, in which there were four convents, and the number of gardens without the walls, materially assisted the operations of a besieging army. The population of the city had been estimated at about 10,000; but it appears not much to have exceeded half that number. The garrison amounted to 4950, including 600 townsmen; the greater part of the others being volunteers, or men newly raised. Camp Marshal D. Andres Perez de Herrasti was governor, an old man, who had been the friend and comrade of Mariano Alvarez.

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*April.*

On the 25th of April 6000 French appeared before the place, and encamped in the *Termino* of Pedro Toro, a league to the eastward. On the 30th, the second division, consisting of from 4000 to 5000, arrived and encamped in the *Termino* of Valde Carros, a league to the north. Five days afterwards another encampment was formed between the two. On May 15th, another division, of about 7000 men, encamped to the westward, upon Monte de Ibanrey. So large a force was necessary, because the English were near at hand. By the 4th of June the city was completely invested. This was not effected without repeated skirmishes, in which

*The French  
besiege it.*

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*D. Julian  
Sanchez.*

the enemy suffered considerable loss. In these affairs, D. Antonio Camargo, commandant of the volunteers of Avila, greatly distinguished himself; but the individual who, above all others, annoyed the enemy by his incessant enterprise, was D. Julian Sanchez, the son of a farmer, near the banks of the Guebra. Till the invasion of his country, he had cultivated his father's lands; but when his father, mother, and sister had been murdered by the French, he made a vow of vengeance, and, at the head of one of those bands which the Spaniards call *guerrillas*, well performed it. On one occasion he surprised, in his father's house, a French colonel, infamous for his atrocities, and put him to death, first telling him who it was that inflicted his merited punishment in this world, and sent him to render account for his crimes in the next.

*Marshal  
Ney summons the  
town.*

This enterprising leader made repeated assaults upon the enemy, not hesitating, at the head of sixty, eighty, or an hundred of his lancers, to attack three or four times his own number. Camargo, and D. Jose Puente, commandant of the cavalry regiment of Ciudad Rodrigo, co-operated ably with him, and the French suffered daily and hourly losses from their indefatigable activity. They suffered also greatly from the artillery of the town, which was excellently served. Ney carried on his operations in a manner which the Spaniards thought prodigal of the lives of his men, be-

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*June.*

ginning his approaches where, in their judgement, a general more sparing of his army would have terminated them. To protect these works, he ordered a great number of holes to be dug, where he posted sharpshooters, by whom the garrison were greatly annoyed. On the 24th of June, Massena arrived and took the command, and at three on the following morning the batteries opened, and a constant fire from six-and-forty pieces of heavy artillery was kept up day and night till the evening of the 28th, when, having made a breach of about five-and-twenty yards in length, Ney required the governor to surrender, "sending him," he said, "this last summons by order of the Prince of Essling, commander-in-chief of the army of Portugal, then present, whose honour and humanity were well known, but who, if the defence were uselessly prolonged, would be compelled to treat him with all the rigour authorized by the laws of war. If he had any hope of being succoured by the English, he was doubtless by that time undeceived; for if such had been their intention, they would not have waited till the city was reduced to its present deplorable state. He had, therefore, to choose between an honourable capitulation, and the terrible vengeance of a victorious army; and a positive answer was requested." Herrasti replied, "that after forty-nine years' service, he could not but know the laws of war and his military duties; the fortress was not in a state

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*Situation of  
Lord Wel-  
lington.*

*Spirit of the  
inhabitants.*

to capitulate ; and whenever circumstances made it his duty, he would then apply for terms, after securing his honour, which was dearer to him than life.”

How galling it must have been for Lord Wellington to witness the progress of the siege, knowing his inability to relieve the town, may well be conceived. His outposts were near enough to hear even the musketry ; but with so large a proportion of his troops half-disciplined and untried, he could not act upon the offensive against an enemy greatly superior in numbers, without incurring the most imminent danger. The only possible plan by which Portugal could be saved he had laid down for himself, and from that plan no circumstances, however painful to his own feelings, or however derogatory in appearance to his reputation, could induce him to swerve. He was in communication with Romana at Badajoz ; but in the state of the Spanish armies, any plan of co-operation for the relief of Ciudad Rodrigo was impossible. It was, however, of great importance that the place should be resolutely defended to the last extremity, and in this hope Romana and the English general were not disappointed. The minds of the people had been prepared for this extremity ; they had their patriotic writers and their poets ; the exploits of Julian Sanchez excited the emulation of the youth, and the conduct of the old governor gave confidence to all. The examples of Za-

ragoza, and Gerona, and Hostalrich, and Astorga, animated the women and children, as well as those who bore arms; for in a cause like theirs they had seen their countrymen acquire a glory when unsuccessful, which could not have been greater had they been victorious. The women and children, when they saw their houses burning, gave way neither to fear nor lamentation, but exerted themselves to quench the flames, and carried refreshment and ammunition to the troops amid the hottest fire. There were two blind beggars in the city: no one supposed that these unfortunate men could render any service during the siege, but zeal taught them how to be serviceable; they carried water to the walls by day, and ammunition by night, with such unwearied activity, that it was the intention of the governor and the Junta, if the town had been saved, to have rewarded them with pensions for life.

It was of great consequence to the Spaniards to keep possession of those buildings without the walls, which would otherwise afford protection to the besiegers, but which also afforded such means for annoying them while they could be defended, that it had not been thought advisable to demolish them before the siege. The nunnery of Santa Cruz was the most important of these buildings. D. Ramon Castellanos was posted there with a company of sixty men, when three hundred of the enemy's grenadiers, with a party of sappers, assailed it in the night, half

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*June.**The nunnery of S. Cruz attacked.*

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the party attacking it in the rear, the other in the front. They blew up the first and second gates; hand grenades were thrown on both sides; the Spaniards, having the advantage of the building, kept up a most destructive discharge of musketry; the commander of the one party was killed, the captain of engineers, who commanded the other, wounded, but he did not retire till he had set fire to the convent. Seeing the flames, the governor made signal for Castellanos to abandon the post, who accordingly let down his men from a window into one of the inner courts of the convent, and descending himself the last, they forced their way with the bayonet. It was a little after midnight when they reached the gate of La Colada: but seeing, while they took food and rested after the action, that the enemy had extinguished the flames, Castellanos went to the governor, and represented to him that his honour was concerned in recovering the post. He led his men at three in the morning, after only two hours' respite, to the assault, and surprising the French, drove them from their dearly purchased conquest, where they left 158 dead, and 45 wounded behind them, the remainder of the wounded having been removed during the short time that they retained possession.

*Convent of  
St. Domingo  
recovered.  
July 2.*

They were driven from the convent of St. Domingo in a manner not less worthy of remembrance. After they had won the building, Herasti was very desirous of recovering it, and yet

hesitated at giving orders for the attempt, knowing the exhausted state of the garrison, and how ill any loss of men could be afforded. A serjeant, by name Manuel Martin, happened to hear what was the state of the governor's feelings upon this subject. This man, who was a native of Zamora, had made himself well known to the French: they called him *agua y vino*, water and wine, the words which he always used when engaged in action with them; wine being his signal for attack, and water that for retreat. He had distinguished himself greatly during the siege, and had at this time a wound in his arm, which however did not prevent him from going to the governor, and soliciting permission to make an attack upon the enemy in this convent, saying, that if he could not drive them out, at least he could annoy them there. Accordingly, choosing out five-and-twenty comrades, he attacked the convent with such well-directed vigour, that the enemy, though greatly superior in numbers, were terrified and took to flight, many of them leaving their knapsacks and muskets behind them. This was so signal an exploit, that Manuel Martin was deservedly promoted for it, and a badge of distinction was given to each of the soldiers.

But against such a force as surrounded them, all that the Spaniards could do was to hold out to the uttermost, and sell the fortress as dearly as possible. Massena boasted of having 100,000 men in the field; he had 66,000 infantry and

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*Julian Sanchez effects his escape from the city.*



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6000 horse, of whom as many as could be advantageously employed carried on the siege, while the others kept the British army in check, Lord Wellington having only 51,000 under his command, including 3000 cavalry, and half this force composed of Portugueze, who were as yet untried, and consequently in whom little reliance could then be placed. They were, however, brigaded with the British in the proportion of one battalion to two, and were every day acquiring confidence and character. The siege was less murderous than that of Zaragoza, because the city was much smaller and less populous, and, having the advantage of regular works, did not require the same kind of defence. When Herrasti and the Junta saw that it was not possible to hold out much longer, they ordered Julian Sanchez and his lancers to make their escape while it was yet practicable, reminding Sanchez how important it was that his services should still be continued, and telling him he would be of more assistance to Ciudad Rodrigo in the field than he could now be within the walls. A little before midnight Sanchez collected his troops in the plaza; the two of his company who were married men took their wives behind them; they sallied out, and their leader, in the spirit of Scanderbeg, instead of contenting himself with merely effecting his own retreat, charged a post of cavalry, routed them, and carried away eight prisoners with their horses. The two women were armed with pis-

tols, and one of them, by name Marta Fraile, saved her husband, by shooting a dragoon who was about to attack him on one side.

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The British army meantime, though it could render no assistance, was far from being idly or ill employed. There had been a prevailing feeling of despondency before the siege began, and an expectation that the town would surrender as soon as the enemy should have opened their fire. The progress of the siege produced more respect for the Spaniards, and the active service in which the men soon found themselves engaged produced cheerfulness and hope. The picquets occupied the line of the Azava from Carpio on the right to its junction with the Agueda; the enemy had 8000 men on the left bank of the Agueda, behind that river and the Azava, which was fordable in many places. The head-quarters of the light division, under Major-General Craufurd, were at Gallegos, a short league distant, in an open country; the greatest alertness, therefore, was necessary, and the men slept at their horses' heads, the horses bridled and the reins in hand. The Germans were selected for the outpost duty, being at that time the only troops in the army who were acquainted with it: the 16th light dragoons requested to be intermixed with them on duty, men and officers; a compliment which gratified the brave men to whom it was paid, and the greatest harmony was always preserved. The picquets were brought to the greatest perfection, and the divi-

*State of the  
British  
army.*

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July.

*A practica-  
ble breach  
made.*

sion soon attained that alertness which could only be learnt in such service. The Portuguese behaved well on the first opportunity which was afforded, and obtained the good opinion of their allies; so that every thing went on satisfactorily in the allied army, except that in a trifling and ill-executed affair Colonel Talbot fell, a gallant officer, who had distinguished himself at Talavera; and was deservedly and greatly lamented.

The French general, to whom time was of more consequence than any cost of lives, pressed the siege with the utmost vigour, but with heavy loss, owing to the repeated sallies of the garrison, and the excellent manner in which the artillery of the Spaniards was served. In hope of forcing the governor to surrender by the cries of the inhabitants, he bombarded the town, and almost destroyed it; but the people were not to be shaken in their purpose, the names of Numantia and Zaragoza were in every mouth, and they were resolved in their turn to transmit a memorable example to posterity. Meantime the regular advances of the besiegers were carried on without intermission, and by the 2d of July a practicable breach had been opened in the Baluarte del Rey. The Spaniards made every exertion to defend it with sacks of earth, estacades, and whatever other obstacles they could oppose to the enemy; but the French did not yet venture an assault; they had so severely experienced the valour of their opponents, that they had determined not to storm the town till the

works should be reduced to such a state, that they might avail themselves of the whole advantage of their numbers. They made three mines, one under the counterscarp, the other two under the curtain of the wall and part of the Calle del Seminario, or College-street, near the Cathedral. The besieged were aware of their progress, but all efforts at impeding it were useless, and at three in the morning of the 10th, the counterscarp was blown up, forming not only an open breach, but such a way to it that carts might ascend from the glacis.

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*July.*

Immediately afterwards the French renewed the fire from all their batteries, and kept it up without intermission for twelve hours. During this time the cry of the soldiers and the inhabitants, women and boys, as well as their husbands and fathers, was, that they would beat off the enemy or die; but the officers and the Junta were well aware, that any farther resistance would only afford the French a pretext for carrying their threats into execution, and putting all to the sword. Thirty thousand men were ready to storm the city that evening. It was not without much difficulty that the people could be induced to hear of a council of war, nor would they have suffered one to be held, had they not seen such undoubted proofs of the patriotism and courage of those who now told them that a surrender was become inevitable. There were some in the council who proposed to follow the example of Julian Estrada at Hostalrich, and

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force their way with the bayonet through their enemies ; but here, as at Astorga, it was urged that they were in different circumstances, and had therefore different duties ; their business now was to preserve 5000 inhabitants, who would else be exposed to the unrestrained vengeance and brutality of the enemy. Finally, it was resolved to capitulate, but not till the latest moment, when there was no longer the slightest hope or possibility of relief.

*The town  
capitulates.**July 10.*

Massena's orders to Ney were to assault the town that evening ; the French advanced for this purpose, and were at the foot of the breach, in the act of mounting, when the white flag was hoisted : the officer who planted it in the breach descended with the terms of capitulation, and presented them to Ney, who sternly told him it was now too late for any thing. The Spaniard, however, had recourse to Massena, who was at that time supposed to be more humane than Ney. The first article was, that the garrison should march out with the honours of war ; the rest were in like manner such as are usual in the like circumstances. Massena having cast his eye over them, said, " Tell your governor, this is no time to ratify the terms in writing ; but I grant all which he requires, and am going to give orders accordingly." He then sent his adjutant-general to bid Ney suspend the assault. Loison immediately marched through the breach, and took possession of the town ; and General Simon, notwithstanding Massena's pledged word,

made the garrison deposit their arms in the arsenal.

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July.

*Conduct of  
the French.*

The other terms were at the moment fulfilled; and when Herrasti, the next day, requested that the capitulation might be signed, in order that he might transmit it to his own government, Massena replied, that as he saw the articles observed, he neither could nor ought to require more. The people had escaped the horrors of an assault; but in other respects they soon found they were at the mercy of a conqueror who acknowledged no other law than his own pleasure. Herrasti had stipulated for the liberty of the civil officers; they, however, were declared prisoners of war. The members of the Junta were thrown into the vilest dungeon of the public gaol, from whence, after having endured for eight-and-forty hours every kind of insult and ill treatment, they were marched on foot to Salamanca, in company with the governor, who alone was permitted to retain his horse. The clergy were arrested and shut up for two days in the church of St. Juan; the old and infirm were then suffered to go to their houses, but forbidden the exercise of their functions; the lay brethren were ordered to serve in the hospitals, and all the others sent prisoners to Salamanca. The next measures were, to impose a contribution of 1,800,000 reales, and to set from six to eight hundred men at work to destroy the batteries, fill up the trenches, and repair the works, compelling them

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to labour like slaves, giving them no provisions, and allowing them little rest.

The account which the French published of their conquest was, according to their system, full of falsehoods. They asserted that the garrison had surrendered at discretion, which could only be contradicted, not disproved, because Massena had broken his word. This falsehood is worthy of remark, because it shows so strikingly the characteristic baseness of Buonaparte's generals. Ciudad Rodrigo was evidently at their mercy ; a generous enemy would have rejoiced to show his sense of the merits of those who had opposed him, and would have known that in refusing them the honours of war, he deprived them only of a barren form ; for the merit of their gallant and heroic defence it was not in his power to efface. Massena, not satisfied with thus injuring Herrasti's honour, cast upon him a fouler aspersion, making him say, that he and the garrison would have surrendered sooner, if they had not been intimidated by the inhabitants. In reality, such had been the noble spirit of the soldiers, that it was only by the entreaties, as well as the arguments of the superior Junta of Castille, whose residence was in that city, that they were prevailed upon to give up their intention of attempting to cut their way through the besiegers. The French general did not forget to insult the English, and endeavour by his falsehoods to exasperate the Spaniards against them. " Ciudad Rodrigo," he said,

“fell in their presence; they promised to succour it; made the inhabitants prolong their defence by this deceitful hope; and suffered the place to fall without making the slightest effort for its relief. Thus they had excited against them the universal indignation of the garrison and the people, who united in exclaiming against their perfidy.”

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*July.*

This justice, however, Massena did to Ciudad Rodrigo, that he admitted the defence had been most obstinate. It was impossible, he said, to form an idea of the state to which it was reduced. Every thing had been battered down; not a single house remained uninjured. The killed he estimated at more than 2000. The Spaniards stated it at only sixty-three of the inhabitants, and 237 of the garrison. Seven thousand soldiers, he said, laid down their arms: . . the number at the commencement of the siege was 4950. Six hundred made their escape on the night of the capitulation, and more than 1500 before they reached Salamanca. Above two-and-forty thousand shells were thrown into the city, and nearly five-and-twenty thousand from it. The quantity of powder consumed by the garrison during the last sixteen days was 893 quintales, . . the quintal being 132 lbs. The French gave no statement of their own loss; it was probably very considerable; the Spaniards estimated it at 3400. The capture, however, occasioned the greatest ex-

*Speculations upon the campaign.*



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ultation in Paris, and the *Moniteur* mingled with its own insults the echoes of our factious journalists. "The good sense of the English people," it said, "enabling them to foresee the dishonour and destruction of their army in Portugal, they are convinced that the most fortunate event which could befall it would be a catastrophe like that of Moore's. They are too much accustomed to calculate chances and events not to know, that alone against France they can, in such a contest, meet nothing but disaster, and obtain nothing but disgrace." "Men of sound judgement, like Grenville or Grey, are numerous in England," said the *Moniteur*, "but they are at present without any influence there." Then, returning to its natural tone of insult, it ridiculed the strength of Lord Wellington's army, amounting to the dreadful number of 24,000 English. "The cries of the inhabitants of Ciudad Rodrigo," it said, "were heard in his camp, which was only six leagues distant: but all ears were shut against them; the English made no attempt to succour that city: . . . they were the laughing-stock of Europe; every coffee-house waiter knew their weakness on land, as well as their influence at sea. Ciudad Rodrigo was one of the last bulwarks of the insurrection; its capture made the catastrophe more imminent for England, who would now find it necessary to call to the helm more prudent men, better ac-

quainted with the nature of the resources and of the strength of their country, and therefore more moderate.”

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In England, too, we were told, that if Ciudad Rodrigo were taken, the efforts of the English might be considered to be at an end; the French would then be able to advance without fear of a check; the harvest also being now begun, whatever grain there was in the country they would be able to secure for themselves, and so form magazines, the want of which had hitherto chiefly retarded their advance. At one time these politicians cried out, “that Lord Wellington could not permit the enemy quietly to prosecute the siege of so important a fortress.” At another, “they would not suppose him capable of fighting a useless battle: for they trusted he was not so prodigal of the blood of his followers. They trusted that his operations would be justified by the event.” Then again “they were not competent to speak from their own knowledge, yet certainly it did appear a doubtful policy to be patiently waiting till Massena had time to concentrate his troops, and make all his arrangements for an attack on the British position.” “The plan of overwhelming Lord Wellington, by bringing an immense superiority to bear upon him, was one which obviously presented itself; there seemed no insurmountable difficulty in the execution; obstacles there might be, from want of provisions and other circumstances, but the skill

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and perseverance of the French in combating them forbade us to place much reliance upon such grounds." In this manner, always presaging evil, and consistent in nothing but despondency, sometimes borrowing the tone of the *Moniteur*, and sometimes setting it, did these journalists of a disappointed party labour to deaden the hearts and hopes of their countrymen ; while their more daring, but hardly more mischievous coadjutors addressed their weekly invectives to the readers and auditors in pot-houses and tap-rooms, abusing their ignorance, appealing to, and inflaming their worst passions, and crying out against the measures of their own government, while upon the crimes of Buonaparte they observed a silence which sufficiently indicated their sympathy with his system, their wishes for the extension of his tyranny, and their hopes of his eventual success.

*La Puebla  
de Sanabria  
occupied by  
the French.*

The fall of Ciudad Rodrigo enabled Massena to detach a force for the relief of Astorga, where General Mahy, who commanded in Galicia, was blockading the French garrison. This object was easily effected. General Taboada at this time occupied Puebla de Sanabria, where he was exerting himself to organize a body of troops for the field : General Echavarria was engaged in like manner at Alcañizas. In such feeble, uncombined efforts the spirit of the country was spent, and its resources frittered away ; for as soon as men enough were brought together to attract the enemy's attention, they

were either dispersed or destroyed. This was the fate of Echavarria's corps ; it was surprised by a French detachment under General La Croix, and nearly annihilated. The alarm spread to Silveira's head-quarters at Braganza, and Colonel Wilson (his second in command) hastened with the advanced guard to Echavarria's support ; but he arrived only to find the ground covered with dead and wounded Spaniards, the enemy having retired to Carvales, after completely accomplishing the purpose of their expedition. Massena boasted soon afterwards of a like success at Sanabria ; but the results were very different. The French magnified the importance of this post, saying that it commanded the entrance into Portugal, and shut up the communication with Galicia. They said also, that Lord Wellington had enjoined the Spanish governor to make an obstinate defence ; but that the governor reproached him in reply for having deceived the commandant of Ciudad Rodrigo, and broken his word with him ; told him it was evident he intended to do nothing for Spain, but only, for the sake of fomenting divisions, held out hopes of assistance, which were never realized ; yet nevertheless offered to shut himself up in the fortress, and bury himself in its ruins, if the English general would send him one Englishman for two Spaniards, to assist in its defence. The answer of Lord Wellington, the French papers said, might easily be conceived ; and the Spanish general therefore

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abandoned the town, where General Serras found twenty pieces of artillery, and provisions for 3000 men for six months. After this the French made no farther mention of the Puebla de Sanabria.

*The Portu-  
guese re-  
take it.*

*July 29.*

*Aug. 3.*

D. Francisco Taboada Gil, the officer who was thus falsely represented as insulting the English general, had communicated not with him but with the Portuguese commander, Silveira, at Braganza, with whom it was agreed that he should evacuate the place if it were attacked by a superior force. Taboada accordingly fell back upon the Portillas de Galicia; Silveira, having ascertained that Serras had returned with the greater part of his troops to Mombuey, concerted measures with the Spanish general for surprising the garrison which the French had left in Sanabria, and on the fourth day after they had taken possession of their boasted conquest, the enemy found themselves invested in the fort. They were summoned; but the commander replied, that he had men and ammunition to defend himself with, and that he expected speedily to be succoured by Marshal Massena. On the following morning a detachment of about seventy French cavalry came on to attack the advanced guard of the Portuguese, under Captain Francisco Texeira Lobo, whose force was about equal; but while he charged them in front, another small party of Portuguese, by his instructions, wheeled round and attacked them in the rear:

they were instantly broken, and twenty-eight were left upon the field, thirty prisoners, and forty horses taken. The remainder of that day was spent in vain endeavours to force an entrance into the fort: the assailants burnt the gates, but the enemy blocked them up effectually with stones; the Portugueze and Spaniards then got possession of a house adjoining, from whence they attempted to make a way through, but the enemy soon battered it down. On the morrow, one mortar and one three-pounder were planted against them; the first became useless after a few discharges, and Silveira, the next morning, sent for a six-pounder from Braganza. He was now apprized that Serras was advancing in force to relieve the garrison. Silveira left the Spaniards to maintain the blockade, and drew up in order of battle upon the river Tera; but Serras, having reconnoitred his force, thought proper to retire upon Mombuey. The six-pounder, from Braganza, was an iron gun, in such a state, that when it arrived it was of no avail; and a twelve-pounder, which on the 8th was brought from the same place, proved in the same condition: this was a serious disappointment, for Silveira was now apprized that Serras was collecting reinforcements. Six hundred horse had entered Zamora, on their way to him, and two battalions of Italian troops were joining him from Benevente, Leon, and Astorga. Unable to batter the place, because of the wretched state of his

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*August.**Aug. 9.*

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1810.  
*August.*

artillery, which had been long left to rust in a dilapidated fortress, he tried the effect of mining ; here experience and skill were wanting, and only the face of the curtain was thrown down. The garrison, however, who were Swiss, dreaded that a second attempt might prove more successful ; and their commandant, pleading that he and his men were not French, proposed and obtained good terms, delivering up the place on condition that they should be allowed to embark from Coruña, and return to their own country, on their parole, not to bear arms against the allied powers. The artillery of the place, and the stores, were restored to the Spaniards ; but Silveira retained for the Portuguese an eagle, the first which they had taken from their enemy. Sixty of the Swiss entered into the service of the allies.

Serras was in sight of Silveira's advanced posts when this capitulation was concluded ; he had with him from 4000 to 5000 foot, and about 800 cavalry. The allied Portuguese and Spaniards were inferior in number, and still more in discipline, and with this unequal force pressing hard upon them they broke up from Sanabria, at a time when the prisoners were come three hours march on the way to Coruña. Colonel Wilson, who had been ordered on an important duty to head-quarters, returned in time to assume the command of the rear-guard, and with it cover their retrograde movement. He checked the French in a sharp affair of cavalry,

after which he took the open road to Braganza, Silveira retreating with the foot upon the heights of Calabor, where the enemy, if they should continue the pursuit, could derive no advantage from their horse. But having arrived too late for saving the garrison, they advanced no farther than Pedralva, and from thence returned to Sanabria, then to Mombuey. This was the termination of General Serras's success at the Puebla de Sanabria; the whole of the garrison which he left there were taken prisoners, and the eagle which was taken with them was deposited with proper triumph in the cathedral at Lisbon, as the first trophy of the regenerated Portuguese.

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1810.  
*August.*

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## CHAPTER XXXII.

CAPTURE OF ALMEIDA. CONDUCT OF THE PORTUGUEZE GOVERNMENT, BATTLE OF BUSACO, RETREAT OF THE BRITISH AND PORTUGUEZE TO THE LINES OF TORRES VEDRAS. THE KING'S ILLNESS.

1810.  
July.

*Massena's  
proclama-  
tion to the  
Portu-  
gueze.*

FROM Ciudad Rodrigo Massena addressed a proclamation to the Portuguese. "Inhabitants of Portugal," he said, "the Emperor of the French has put under my orders an army of 110,000 men, to take possession of this kingdom, and to expel the English, your pretended friends. Against you he has no enmity: on the contrary, it is his highest wish to promote your happiness, and the first step for securing it is to dismiss from the country those locusts who consume your property, blast your harvests, and palsy your efforts. In opposing the Emperor, you oppose your true friend; a friend who has it in his power to render you the happiest people in the world. Were it not for the insidious counsels of England, you might now have enjoyed peace and tranquillity, and have been put in possession of that happiness. You have blindly rejected offers calculated only to promote your benefit, and have accepted proposals which will long be the curse of Por-

tugal. His majesty has commissioned me to conjure you that you would awake to your true interests ; that you would awake to those prospects which, with your consent, may be quickly realized ; awake so as to distinguish between friends and enemies. The King of England is actuated by selfish and narrow purposes ; the Emperor of the French is governed by principles of universal philanthropy. The English have put arms into your hands, arms which you know not how to use : I will instruct you. They are to be the instruments of annihilation to your foes : . . and who those foes are I have already shown. Use them as you ought, and they will become your salvation ! Use them as you ought not, and they will prove your destruction ! Resistance is vain. Can the feeble army of the British general expect to oppose the victorious legions of the Emperor ? Already a force is collected, sufficient to overwhelm your country. Snatch the moment that mercy and generosity offer ! As friends you may respect us, and be respected in return ; as foes you must dread us, and in the conflict must be subdued. The choice is your own, either to meet the horrors of a bloody war, and see your country desolated, your villages in flames, your cities plundered ; or to accept an honourable and happy peace, which will obtain for you every blessing that by resistance you would resign for ever."

On the same day that Ciudad Rodrigo sur-

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*July.*

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July.

*The French  
invest Al-  
meida.*

rendered, the enemy's cavalry appeared on the plains of Almeida. Lord Wellington's headquarters at this time were at Alverca: his position was a defensive line, about thirty miles in extent, along the frontier mountains of Beira; but as the line formed a segment of a circle, the points were not distant from each other in proportion to its length. The infantry extended from Celorico to Guarda on the one side, and to Fort Conception, one of the outworks of Almeida, on the other. The cavalry were in advance near Fort Conception, and at Sabugal, and on the Coa. The enemy's superiority in horse was very great, but the nature of the ground deprived them of the advantage which this must otherwise have given them. They now proceeded to invest Almeida. The operations of the siege were conducted by the second corps, under Marshal Ney. Junot, with the 8th, had his head-quarters at S. Felices, and his cavalry at Villar de Porco, Fuente Guinaldo, and Fuentes d'Onoro, ground which had not then been rendered memorable in military history. While this portion of the army covered the siege, Serras with a division of 7000 men at Benevente threatened Tras os Montes, and Bonnet with 8000 at Astorga was ready to enter Galicia and the province of Entre Douro e Minho.

*Almeida.*

Dumouriez, forgetting Elvas at the time, has called Almeida the strongest place in Portugal. It is perhaps more important from its situation,

but very far inferior to it in strength. This town was founded by the Moors, and is said to have been one of those which Ferrando the Great won from them while the Cid served under him, in his first wars. When the tide of success was for a while turned by the entrance of the Almoravides into Spain, Talmayda, as it was then called, fell again into the hands of the misbelievers, from whom it was finally reconquered, in 1190, by King Sancho I. of Portugal. Payo Guterres distinguishing himself in the conquest, obtained from it the appellative of *O Almeydam*, the *Almeydan*, and transmitted to his descendants the surname of *Almeyda*, conspicuous in Portuguese and Indian history, but disgraced at this time by the representative of the family, who was then engaged in Massena's army as a traitor. King Diniz, the ruins of whose magnificent works are to be seen in every part of Portugal, rebuilt the city, and is supposed to have removed it from a valley, a little way north of its present site. The castle was built by him, and repaired by King Emanuel. In the later wars between Spain and Portugal, Almeida has always been considered a place of great importance, being the bulwark of the latter country on its most accessible side; but, like other things of more essential consequence to the strength of a kingdom, it had long been neglected. In 1809 there were not a dozen gun-carriages fit for service, nor any wood in store for the construction of others; the em-

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brazures were falling to decay, and the palisades of the covert-way had been mostly broken, or carried away for fire-wood. The works were originally ill constructed, and the place had the great disadvantage of being commanded on one side by a hill. Its population in 1747 was 2463; and Almeida is not one of the few places in Portugal which have been progressive since that time.

*Fort Con-  
ception  
abandoned.*

The same causes which rendered it impossible for Lord Wellington to relieve Ciudad Rodrigo, made it necessary for him to leave Almeida to its own means of defence; but the works had been repaired, the garrison was strong, and Brigadier Cox, an English officer in the Portuguese service, was appointed to the command. With the example of Ciudad Rodrigo before it, there was no reason to doubt that Almeida would make a vigorous resistance, and probably hold out so long as materially to derange the plans of the enemy. Fort Conception was abandoned and blown up at the enemy's approach. General Craufurd, however, continued to occupy a position near Almeida with 3200 British and 1100 Portuguese troops, eight squadrons of cavalry included. The chain of his cavalry outposts formed a semicircle in front of the town, their right flank resting on the Coa, near As Naves, about three miles above this fortress, and their left, in like manner, resting upon the same river, about three miles below it, near Cinco Villas. The

centre was covered by a small stream, and on the right and centre, where it was expected that the enemy would advance, the cavalry posts were supported by piquets of infantry. There was but one road by which the artillery and cavalry could retreat, that leading from Almeida to the bridge, which is about a mile west of the town. The nature of the ground made it difficult for the enemy to approach this road on the left of the allies, and on the south the infantry were placed to cover it, having their right flank resting on the Coa above the bridge, their front covered by a deep rocky ravine, and their left in some enclosures near a windmill\*, on the plain, about 800 yards south of the town.

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On the morning of July 24th, the centre of the British line of piquets was attacked; they were supported by the 14th light dragoons and two guns, but were withdrawn when a considerable column of the enemy appeared with artillery, and began to form on the other side of the rivulet. The force which Marshal Ney, who directed these movements, brought into the field, consisted of 20,000 foot and between 3000 and 4000 horse, being in fact his whole corps. Fifteen squadrons of cavalry crossed the rivulet

*Affair on  
the Coa.*

\* Upon this windmill the governor intended to mount a gun, and the gun was lying in it, but not as yet mounted, and consequently useless; another dismounted gun was lying near

the mill. These guns of course could be of no use in the action which ensued, but they figured in Marshal Massena's account of it.

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as soon as the piquets retired, and formed with artillery in front, and about 7000 infantry on their right; other troops meantime were advancing upon the right of the British position, the side on which they might best expect to cut off the retreat of the allies to the bridge. General Craufurd now perceived that it was impossible for him to prevent the investment of Almeida, and that he was on the wrong side of the Coa. The artillery and cavalry were therefore ordered to retreat along the only road which was practicable for them; the infantry from the left to move off in *echelon*; the right it was necessary to hold till the last, to prevent the enemy from approaching the bridge by a road coming from Junca, which runs in the bottom of the valley by the river side.

On the left, the men had to retreat through thick vineyards, intersected with deep trenches, and with walls six or seven feet high; they could not take advantage of this ground, for the enemy were in such force, that there was imminent danger of being overpowered, and cut off before they could reach the bridge. One of these walls General Craufurd had considered as a complete defence against cavalry; it enclosed a vineyard, in which some companies had been stationed, but there had been a heavy rain during the whole of the preceding night, and the troops had pulled down this wall in many places to make use of the stones for forming a shelter; through these openings the enemy's

horse entered, and here they made most of the prisoners who were taken in the action. To retire in order over such ground was impossible, but the retreat was made with characteristic coolness. On the other side the bridge, the ground was equally unfavourable for re-forming; the 43d and part of the 95th regiments were ordered to form in front of the bridge, and defend it as long as they could, while the rest of the troops should pass over and take a new position. They obeyed these orders so literally, that they defended it all day; three times the enemy attempted to force the passage, and each time they were repulsed at the point of the bayonet; at length, when night closed, and every thing had passed over, and the enemy had ceased to assail them, these brave men retreated from the post where so many of their comrades had fallen: the heaviest loss necessarily fell upon these gallant regiments; the total, in killed, wounded, and prisoners, amounted to 330\*. Colonel Hall of the 43d, who was among

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\* Massena's official statement of this action was a masterpiece of impudent falsehood. He asserted that General Craufurd's force consisted of 2000 horse and 8000 foot, and that they were all posted under the guns of the fortress; that they gave way before the French, our cavalry not daring to meet them with the sabre, and the infantry pursued at a running step; that we lost sixty officers, of whom twenty-four were buried in the field of battle; 400 killed, 700 wounded,

400 prisoners, one stand of colours, and two pieces of cannon, while the loss of the conquerors did not amount to 300. He took no colours, and the two pieces of cannon were the dismounted guns at the windmill. In a subsequent dispatch Massena assured the war-minister that all his troops were burning with impatience to teach the English army what they had already taught Craufurd's division. Our own gazette had already shown the veracity of this boast-



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the slain, had only joined from England the preceding day. The loss was to be regretted because there was no object to be gained by engaging the French at such disadvantage; but never did men behave more gallantly than those who were engaged that day, British and Portuguese alike. They effected their retreat under the most unfavourable circumstances, without losing a gun, a trophy, or a single article of field equipment; and they inflicted upon the enemy a loss, which, by his own account, was nearly equal to the sum of ours, and which in reality doubled its amount. After this the infantry were withdrawn to the neighbourhood of Celorico, leaving the outpost duty to be performed by cavalry alone.

*Desponding  
letters from  
the army.*

Massena asserted that one of our couriers had been taken with dispatches, which represented that the English had never been engaged in so brisk an affair; that they were in full rout; and that it was impossible to form an idea of their deplorable condition. Of the condition of that army, and the full rout to which he had driven them, it was not long before Massena obtained some correct personal knowledge; but it is probable that some desponding letters had fallen into his hands, and it is likely also that he expected to drive the British army before him full speed to Lisbon. Letters had been written

er's account; but this new insult called forth a counter-statement from General Craufurd, from which this detail has chiefly been

drawn, and to the truth of which the whole British army were witnesses.

from that army to Porto, in which the writers had delivered it as their opinion that our forces must inevitably retreat, Massena having such an overpowering superiority, that Portugal could not possibly be defended against him. These letters excited such alarm among the British merchants in that city, that the vice-consul applied to our admiral at Lisbon, requesting he would take into consideration the necessity of having a sufficient force off the Douro to protect the British subjects, who might be compelled to embark without the least delay. They were in the utmost consternation, he said. Admiral Berkeley thought it proper to send this requisition to Lord Wellington, who in consequence issued general orders upon the subject. "He would not make any inquiry," he said, "to ascertain the authors of these letters, which had excited so much consternation in a place where it was most to be wished that none should exist. He had frequently lamented the ignorance displayed in letters from the army, and the indiscretion with which those letters were published. It was impossible that many officers could possess a sufficient knowledge of facts to be able to form a correct opinion of the probable events of the campaign, yet when their erroneous opinions were published, they could not but produce mischievous effects. He requested, therefore, that the officers, on account of their own reputation, would refrain from giving opinions upon matters, with regard

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to which they could not possibly possess the necessary knowledge for giving it with correctness; and if they communicated to their correspondents facts relating to the position of the army, its strength, the formation of its magazines, preparations for cutting down or blowing up bridges, &c., they would at least tell their correspondents not to publish these letters in newspapers, unless it was certain that the publication could not prove injurious to the army and to the public service."

*Apprehensions expressed in England.*

There was cause for this reproof. The effect of such agueish predictions in Portugal could only be to make the Portuguese believe we should forsake them, and thus dispose them for submission to the enemy; while, in England, they assisted the party of the despondents, whose journalists were labouring to strike their country with a dead palsy. "We had been lulled," they said, "into the most dangerous confidence. Massena was only waiting for the advance of his flanks, that he might, with his whole combined army, either force our handful of men to a battle, or surround them: all that could be expected was, that the survivors might be enabled to retire to their ships with eclat." By the next dispatches it appeared, that it was more easy for a journalist to imagine such a manœuvre, than for Massena to execute it; but this had no other effect than to make them change the note of alarm. "If Massena," they then said, "did not destroy Lord Wellington's

army by fighting, it could only be because he meant to destroy it by not fighting; for Massena was the most consummate captain of all Buonaparte's generals. And did ministers anticipate with complacency the continuance of our army in Portugal through the winter? The rainy season was approaching; might it not be the deep policy of this arch-statesman and conqueror to keep our army there? He would be content to devote Massena and his troops to destruction, if it would facilitate some ulterior plan; he might mean to ruin us by the expense of our forces there; and what should we say, if it were really a part of his policy to keep them there, while he, having possession of the Dutch, the Danish, and the Swedish fleets and ports, made a descent upon England or Ireland? They trusted ministers were upon their guard, and that they destined their troops at home for a service more imminent than the reinforcement of Lord Wellington."

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While these writers, in the pure spirit of faction, were thus advising a diversion in favour of the enemy, Ney, who conducted the siege of Almeida, directed Loison to summon the governor. This general, who was peculiarly odious in that country for his cruelty and rapacity, addressed the governor as a Portugeze, admonishing him not to hazard the interests of his nation for a vain point of honour. "None," said he, "knows better than you do, that the French come to deliver you from the yoke of the Eng-

*Ney summons the governor of Almeida.*

*July 24.*

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lish. There is not a Portugeze who is ignorant of the little consideration which his country enjoys among that people. Have they not given abundant proofs of the little attention which they pay to a nation worthy of esteem, and for a long time the ally of France? Their occupation of all the civil and military posts proves to demonstration, that the intention of the English government is to consider Portugal as one of her colonies. The conduct which the English have held with regard to the Spaniards, whom they promised to defend, but abandoned, should open your eyes, and convince you that they will do the same with regard to Portugal. Sir Governor, his excellency has charged me to offer you the most honourable capitulation, by which you may retain the government of your fortress, and your garrison be admitted into the number of those Portugeze troops that have remained faithful to the interests of their country. In your hands therefore, is placed the fate of Almeida, and of your companions in arms. If you refuse to accede to this proposal, you will become responsible for all the blood shed unavailingly, in a cause which is foreign to the Portugeze nation.” Brigadier Cox happened to be in the covered-way, close to the barrier gate, when the flag of truce arrived with this summons. Without permitting the French officer to enter, he returned a verbal answer, that the fortress would be defended to the last extremity.

*Portuguese  
in Masse-  
na's army.*

The Portugeze troops, of whom Loison spake

as being engaged in the service of France, were the remainder of those whom Junot had hurried away from their own country. The men, Buonaparte was too wary to send back; but Massena brought with him a few nobles, who, having long preyed upon the country which they disgraced, completed their infamy by betraying it. To these traitors Loison appealed in his summons, saying, they could assure the governor of the honourable manner in which they had been treated. The Marquis of Alorna, D. Pedro de Almeida, was the most conspicuous among them; he and his accomplices used all their influence to persuade their countrymen to submission; but the Portuguese had already experienced the effects of non-resistance, and the inhabitants of Castello Mendo, and a few other villages on the borders of Beira, were the only persons who were unfortunate enough to be deceived. These poor people, instead of abandoning their habitations on the approach of the enemy, in obedience to the orders which had been issued, remained in them, fearing to encounter the evils of wandering in search of shelter, and hoping, that, as they submitted to the enemy without resistance, their property would be safe, their women preserved from violation, and their lives secured. But the French, conscious of the wickedness of the cause in which they were engaged, seemed, like the pirates of the last century, to have considered themselves in a state of reprobation, and to have committed

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crimes which make humanity shudder, as if for the purpose of manifesting their desperate defiance of God and man. “The inhabitants of these submissive villages suffered all the evils which a cruel enemy could inflict; their property was plundered; their houses burnt; their women atrociously violated; and those, whose age and sex did not provoke the brutal violence of the soldiers, fell victims to the confidence which they placed in promises made only to be broken.” In these words the enormities which the French committed were proclaimed by the Portuguese government, and by the British general.

*The Portuguese ordered to retire before the enemy.*  
Aug. 4.

That general addressed a proclamation to the Portuguese upon the occasion, telling them they now saw what they had to expect from the French. They now saw that no means remained for avoiding the evils with which they were threatened, but a determined and vigorous resistance, and a firm resolution to obstruct as much as possible the advance of the enemy, by removing out of his reach all such things as might contribute to his subsistence, or facilitate his progress. “The army under my command,” said he, “will protect as large a portion of the country as is possible; but it is obvious that the people alone can deliver themselves by a vigorous resistance, and preserve their goods by removing them out of the reach of the enemy. The duties, therefore, that bind me to his Royal Highness the Prince Regent of Portugal, and to

the Portuguese nation, oblige me to make use of the power and authority with which I am furnished, for compelling the careless and indolent to make the necessary efforts to preserve themselves from the dangers which threaten them, and to save their country. In conformity with this, I make known and declare, that all magistrates and persons in authority who shall remain in the villages or towns, after having received orders from the military officer to remove, and all persons, of whatever class they may be, who shall maintain the least communication with, or aid and assist in any manner the enemy, shall be considered as traitors to the state, and tried, and punished as such an enormous crime requires." The manner in which Lord Wellington assumed this power, in the name of the Prince Regent of Portugal, and of the Portuguese nation, was as wise as the assumption itself was necessary in such circumstances. The Portuguese people also were fully sensible that their duty and their interest were the same, and never did any people act with more determined zeal in defence of their country.

Massena opened his trenches on the night of August 15. While a false attack was made against the north of the town, 2000 men dug the first parallel to a depth of three feet; and on Sunday the 26th, at five in the morning, eleven batteries, mounted with sixty-five pieces of cannon, opened their fire. The garrison consisted of 5000 men, of whose spirit no doubt was

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*Siege of  
Almeida.*



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entertained ; the fortress was well provided, and its works had been placed in so respectable a state, that Lord Wellington had reason to think it might delay the enemy till late in the season, even if he should be unable to find an opportunity of relieving it. These well-founded expectations were frustrated by one of those chances which sometimes disconcert the wisest plans, and disappoint the surest hopes of man. On the night after the batteries opened, the large powder magazine in the citadel, with two smaller ones contiguous to it, blew up. More than half the artillerymen, a great number of the garrison, and many of the inhabitants, perished in this dreadful explosion ; many of the guns were dismounted, and the works were rendered no longer defensible, even if means of defence had been left ; but, except a few cartridges for immediate use, and thirty-nine barrels of powder in the laboratory, the whole of the ammunition was destroyed.

*Surrender  
of the place.*

Great as the calamity was, the evil would have been far more alarming had it proceeded, as was at first supposed, from treason ; but, according to the best information which could be collected, it was altogether accidental : the magazine was bomb-proof ; and they were taking ammunition from it, when a shell fell upon one of the carts. The lieutenant-governor had behaved well till the batteries opened ; he was then so terrified, that he shut himself up in the bomb-proofs. Having thus proved himself a coward, mere

shame made him a traitor : and after the explosion he took advantage of the confusion to counteract the governor's attempt at holding out longer. Another traitor was found in the major of artillery. He had behaved well during the siege ; but when he was sent out to propose terms of capitulation, for the purpose of gaining favour with the enemy he communicated to him the whole extent of the disaster ; so that Massena, knowing the place was at his mercy, was enabled to dictate what terms he pleased. The garrison were made prisoners of war, with this exception, that the militia, having deposited their arms, should return to their homes, and not serve during the war. It was ten at night when the capitulation was concluded ; in the course of half an hour the French recommenced their fire upon the town, and kept it up till morning, when the Portuguese were assured in reply to their remonstrances, that it had been owing to a mistake on the part of the artillery officers : undoubtedly it had been so ; but the commander is chargeable with something worse than error, for having suffered it to continue through the night without thinking it worth while to send an order which would instantly have stopped it.

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*Compila-  
çam das  
Ordens do  
Dia, 1810,  
p. 168.*

The terms were broken by the French with their wonted perfidy. They tried persuasions first, and employed Alorna and the other traitors who were with him to seduce their countrymen. Accordingly, when the Portuguese laid down

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guese pri-  
soners enlist  
and desert.*

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*Condemna-  
tion of their  
conduct.*

their arms upon the esplanade, they were invited to volunteer into the French service ; but not a man was found base enough to come forward and accept the invitation. On the following day, when the troops of the line and the militia had been separated, they were tried separately. The troops were told, that unless they accepted the alternative which was offered them, they must immediately be marched into France ; the hardships which they would suffer on their march, and the treatment to which they would be exposed afterwards, were represented to them in strong terms ; and officers and men, with an unanimity which might well have been suspected, agreed then to enlist in the enemy's service. They found means of informing Marshal Beresford that they did this only for the sake of remaining within reach of their own country, and making their escape as soon as possible ; and the truth of this declaration was proved by the numbers who soon rejoined the allied army. Upon this occasion Marshal Beresford acted in a manner becoming the British character. He expressed in general orders his strong disapprobation of such conduct ; for the soldiers, he said, some allowance was to be made ; they were excusable on the score of their want of education, their undoubted good intention, and their feeling that the enemy with whom they had to deal scrupled at no means, however unworthy, for the attainment of his ends. Yet even in them it was to be discommended, and

he doubted not that henceforth those whom the fortune of war might throw into the enemy's hands would take their lot patiently, and suffer any thing rather than bring a stain upon the national honour. Nothing could excuse the officers for conduct so base, so abominable, and so unworthy of the Portuguese name. They had sinned against knowledge, and thereby rendered themselves false and infamous; they had contracted a voluntary engagement with the determination of not keeping it, placing themselves in a miserable predicament, which rendered it only less infamous to break their faith than to observe it. He should therefore report them to their prince, that they might be dismissed with ignominy from the service, and answer for their conduct according to the laws. At the same time he published the names of five officers who, under a proper sense of duty, had withstood the contagion of ill example.

There were three militia regiments in Almeida, those of Trancoso, Guarda, and Arganil. Neither man nor officer of these could be induced to serve against his country, nor self-seduced to tamper with his own conscience. But instead of dismissing them according to the terms, Massena said, that if they would not serve by fair means, they should by force; and gave orders for forming a corps of pioneers, by detaining 200 men and seven officers from each regiment. Marshal Beresford observed upon this, after honourably contrasting the conduct

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forced into  
the French  
service.*

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of the militia with that of the regular troops, that the Portuguese, to their misfortune, were too well acquainted with French morality for this iniquity to surprise them: it was but one injury the more which that outraged nation had to revenge, . . . and his army would revenge it. "Never," said he, "even though Almeida is lost, never since the beginning of the war has this kingdom been in so good a state for resisting the enemy. Soldiers of the Portuguese army, if you remember that we have the English army to co-operate with us, which has beaten the enemy whenever it encountered them, . . . if you call to mind who is the commander of that army, and that he is yours also, . . . if you have confidence in him and in yourselves, the invaders never can conquer Portugal. Your general has full confidence in the result, because he confides in the inherent loyalty and valour of the nation, and in its determination of sacrificing every thing to its fidelity, its liberty, and its independence!"

*They escape and rejoin the allies.*

Massena asserted that the Porto regiment hated the English, and therefore he should retain it in his service; but he belied his own assertion by adding that he should keep a watchful eye on the men, and not place them in important posts. If he judged in any degree of the Portuguese people by the few traitorous nobles and fidalgos with whom he was conversant, he was speedily undeceived. A night had not elapsed before great part both of the

officers and men were missing, and in less than a fortnight nearly the whole escaped. The men, instead of taking the opportunity of deserting, rejoined their countrymen in arms; and the officers, unconscious of having done any thing unworthy, presented themselves to the commander of the first detachment they could reach, in a condition which pleaded for them, exhausted with fatigue and hunger. They protested, when they found it necessary to excuse themselves, that they had taken no oath of fidelity to the French, and that to avoid it when it was to be tendered, they had fled at all hazards, not waiting for safer opportunities. A representation in their favour was made by Silveira; and Marshal Beresford in consequence mitigated his former censure. It would, he said, be the greatest satisfaction to him if he should find it confirmed that these officers had not pledged themselves to the enemy; but what he wished to enforce upon them was, that an officer ought to consider not merely the end at which he aims, but the means also by which to bring it about, that both may be alike honourable. He referred their conduct therefore to a council of inquiry, under Silveira.

The Portuguese regency now declared Alorna a traitor, and offered a reward of a thousand moidores for bringing him in alive or dead. The Marquis of Ponte de Lima, the Marquis of Loule, the Count of St. Miguel, the Count of Ega, Gomes Friere de Andrade, and D. José

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the Portu-  
guese re-  
gency.*

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Carcome Lobo, were also declared traitors, and their property declared to be confiscated: but they had powerful friends in the state; and it is said that, notwithstanding the decree, their property remained untouched, in the hands of persons in whom they could confide. A change had lately taken place in the Portuguese regency. The Marquez das Minas resigned, in consequence of an illness which soon proved fatal. The other two members were, the Bishop of Porto, who was Patriarch elect, and the Marquis Monteiro Mor. Four new members were now added; the Principal Sousa, brother to the Conde de Linhares, who was minister in Brazil, and to the Portuguese ambassador in England; the Conde de Redondo; Ricardo Raymundo Nogueira, who had been law professor at Coimbra; and the English ambassador, Mr. Stuart. Admiral Berkeley was at the same time appointed by the Prince of Brazil commander-in-chief of the naval, as Lord Wellington had been of the military force of Portugal. There are few things in the annals of Great Britain more honourable to the national character than the perfect confidence reposed in the English nation by its old ally, and the manner in which that confidence was requited. While the enemies of both countries were endeavouring to incense the Portuguese against the English, by telling them that the British government designed to usurp Portugal; and while the enemies of administration were traducing and insulting the Portu-

gueze people, crying out that they would not defend themselves and could not be defended by us, and therefore that we ought not to attempt to defend them, the English army and the Portuguese people were acting with the most perfect unanimity, for the common interests and common safety of Great Britain and Portugal.

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The spirit of the people, without which all other means of defence must have been ineffectual, was what England could neither give nor take away ; but for the measures by which that spirit was so directed as to secure its end, Portugal was indebted to British councils. Military and financial resources, of which the nation had not supposed itself capable, were called forth ; and the Portuguese were addressed by their rulers in language to which they had long been unaccustomed, . . the language of hope and confidence, and of conscious rectitude as well as conscious strength. Like the Supreme Junta, the regents reminded the Portuguese of their heroic ancestors ; they spake of the wickedness of the enemy, the inexpressible miseries which would accompany their yoke, and the certainty of glorious success, if those exertions and sacrifices were made which the emergency required ; but the Portuguese regency did not, like the Spaniards, speak to the people of the causes which had rendered this invasion possible, and produced the decay of Portugal ; nor did they hold out the promise of the restoration of their rights, the redress of their grievances, and the

*Conduct of  
the Portu-  
guese go-  
vernment.*



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due execution of their laws. Such promises were not necessary as excitement ; a people who were literally defending their hearths and altars, and fighting to save their wives and daughters from violation and butchery, or to revenge them, needed no additional feeling to goad them on : . . as pledges they were not held out ; because the government had not the prudence to think of reforming itself. In providing for the defence of the country, it acted providently and bravely, with wisdom and with vigour ; but in other things, the old leaven discovered itself, and made it apparent that the pleasure of the minister was still the law of Portugal. A decree was published, assigning to the widows, children, or dependent brethren of those who had fallen at Almeida, the full pay of the deceased, and half pay to the families of those who were made prisoners. “ The Prince,” it said, “ would not believe that any of his faithful vassals could have entered the service of the enemy ; and if any had been compelled to do so, he trusted they had only yielded to compulsion, with the purpose of effecting their escape. He suspended, therefore, his justice ; but if a month elapsed before such persons acquitted themselves by appearing, they would be considered as traitors.” Now, the treason of the lieutenant-governor and the major of artillery was open and undoubted : Lord Wellington had stated it in his dispatches to the minister at war ; their names were given in those dispatches here in England, but sup-

pressed in Portugal, out of favour to their connexions.

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In another respect the conduct of the Portuguese regency was more inexcusable. Eight-and-forty persons, of all ranks and professions, and many of them unacquainted with each other, were seized in the night; ten of them were sent to the tower of St. Julian, and the rest to the Limoeiro, the common prison of the city. The most alarming rumours were scattered abroad. A formidable and extensive conspiracy, it was said, had been discovered, which had nothing less for its object than a general massacre of the British, for the purpose of delivering up the country to the French. These reports reached England, and received their first contradiction from the Portuguese government themselves, who found it expedient to declare, that neither Lord Wellington nor Mr. Stuart had any part in their proceedings upon this occasion; that the stories of the conspiracy, and of the arms which had been discovered, were false; and that the individuals who had been arrested had been sent out of the kingdom, only because it was the opinion of the police that their residence in it might be prejudicial to the public tranquillity. Some of these individuals were permitted to come to England, others were sent to the Azores, after they had suffered every kind of inconvenience, privation, and indignity, to the alarm and distress of the families of all, and the ruin of some; . . there was neither proof nor

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*Arbitrary*  
*arrests at*  
*Lisbon.*

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accusation against them ; the whole, as a public act, was one of those acts which mark the unheeding and unfeeling folly of an ignorant and obstinate despotism, but of which the secret springs are to be found in private malice or cupidity.

The manner in which the Portuguese government declared, that neither Marshal General Lord Wellington, nor the minister plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty, nor any individual of the British nation, had any part in these proceedings, nor any previous knowledge of them, make it apparent that the British general and the British minister disapproved of an act of tyranny which was thus in reality disclaimed on their part. They could not prevent that of which they were not apprised before it was done, nor after it was done could they express their disapprobation better than by requiring to have it thus distinctly stated, that the regency had neither acted upon their advice, nor received their sanction. It was the more to be regretted, because the other measures of the government entitled them to respect and gratitude. They had restored order in the country, and brought its resources into action, and their public acts and declarations corresponded to the spirit of the people. The ring-leaders of the mutiny, which, in its consequences, had given Soult possession of Porto, were brought to trial and condign punishment ; and after the most impartial examination of his

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conduct, General Bernardim Freire de Andrada, who had been murdered at Braga, was declared to have served his country faithfully and well, and the memory of those unfortunate men who perished in the same tumult was cleared of all imputation. An army more numerous than Portugal had ever before possessed was formed, equipped, and disciplined; and the government, when it reminded the people of their strength, did not fear to tell them of their danger. It announced the loss of Almeida, . . . “a loss,” said the regents, “greatly to be lamented for the death of part of its defenders, and the unhappiness of others, who have thus fallen into captivity, but of little importance to the great cause of the salvation of the country. Wellington at the head of the allied armies; Beresford directing our troops, who are indebted to him for their organization and their discipline; brave soldiers, and a faithful people, who have sworn to defend their prince and their native land to the last extremity; these are the bulwarks which defend us; and these an army of slaves, who are continually wasting away by want and desertion, will never be able to beat down.”

The Portuguese, and those especially who were intrusted with the government of their country, cannot be extolled above their merits, for the spirit which they displayed at this crisis, the most momentous, and to ordinary minds the most appalling of the whole war. Their merit is the greater because there was not that vigour

*Apprehensions of the British government.*

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in the British cabinet which the emergency required; and because with all their confidence in British fidelity, they could not have been without some apprehension of seeing the defence of Portugal abandoned by Great Britain. The enemy had exultingly proclaimed that the English would fly to their ships, and some colour for the boast was afforded by the fact that a fleet large enough to receive the troops was lying in the Tagus, and evidently detained there for such a service. The heavy baggage of the army was actually kept on board; and Lord Wellington was at that time acting under instructions of a character to excite in him any thing rather than confidence or hope. They were to this effect, that his majesty would be better pleased if the army were withdrawn too soon, than that its embarkation should be endangered by the least delay. Such instructions must inevitably have drawn on the disgrace and ruin which they anticipated, if they had been addressed to a man of inferior capacity, or meaner mind. A want of courage and of generosity was implied in them which is but too characteristic of British ministries. Instead of assuring the commander of support, whatever might be the issue, if nothing on his part were left undone, he was made to understand that any risk which he incurred must be upon his own responsibility, and that any disaster which he might sustain would be imputed to his decision. But Providence was with us, and di-

rected the course of events to a glorious and happy issue, notwithstanding our repeated errors.

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Lord Wellington had the farther mortification of knowing that the army, satisfied as he was with its conduct in all respects, partook that despondency which the pestilent activity of a faction at home was continually labouring to produce, and which the events of the campaign had hitherto tended to confirm. His plans had been long meditated and wisely formed; but the reasonable expectations which he founded upon them were disappointed by the accident that drew after it the fall of Almeida. That place might easily have held out till the autumnal rains should have rendered it impossible for the French to advance, and scarcely practicable for them to have subsisted their army upon that frontier. To gain time at this juncture was for him to gain every thing: here he thought to have wintered in the sure expectation that every day would render the Portuguese troops more efficient, and with the reasonable hope that, through Marquis Wellesley's influence in the cabinet, he should receive such reinforcements as would enable him to act upon the offensive. Accident had frustrated this intent; the enemy were enabled to advance, elated with their fortune, and relying upon it as the only divinity in which they were encouraged to trust; and Massena, whose plans had hitherto succeeded beyond his calculations, and even to the extent of his hopes, had the advantage of relying upon

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*September.**Movements  
of Regnier's  
corps, and  
of General  
Hill.*

the disposition as well as the efficiency of his army, and the full support of a government which placed ample means at his command, crippled him with no restrictions, and threatened him with no responsibility.

Upon the fall of Almeida Lord Wellington's head-quarters were removed to Gouvea, and the whole of his infantry retired to the rear of Celorico, the outposts continuing in advance of that town. Massena waited till he had been joined by Regnier's corps, consisting of 17,000 men, which, having acted with little success against Romana in Extremadura, had crossed the Tagus at Barca de Alconete, early in July. According to the plan which Buonaparte had laid down for the conquest of Portugal, this corps was to have moved by the right bank of the Tagus upon Abrantes; but this design having been altered when the allied army was found more numerous and efficient than the French cabinet had supposed, Regnier had moved upon Zarzamayor, Penamacor, and Monsanto, in the hope of striking a blow against Lieutenant-General Hill, who had advanced with 13,000 men from Abrantes to Portalegre, for the purpose of supporting Romana. The French hoped either that he would expose himself to an attack, or that Lord Wellington might be tempted to make a movement against Regnier, of which Massena was prepared to take advantage; but the British generals were not thus to be circumvented: and Massena as well as Lord Wellington, directing

his attention to a single object, Regnier joined the invading force, while Hill was stationed at Sarzedas, to cover the road upon Abrantes to Lisbon, or move to Ponte de Murcella, and unite with the main body on the line of its retreat: in either case Major-General Leith's division, which was kept at Thomar in reserve to support him, was to take the same direction.

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Had Massena despised the allied army in truth as he affected to do, he would now have marched by Castello Branco, Abrantes, and Santarem, direct upon Lisbon, leaving Lord Wellington behind him; but he remembered the fate of Junot, and had too much respect for the enemy with whom he had to contend. Relying, however, upon numbers and fortune, and taking into account the indecision and timidity which seemed to characterize the British counsels, he expected that Lord Wellington, being too weak to risk a battle, would retreat, if not fly before him, with no other hope than that of reaching the ships and securing his embarkation. Under this imagination he ordered the French army to provide itself for seventeen days, by which time he expected to finish the campaign triumphantly. The only impediment which he apprehended on the way was from the difficulty of transport. For this reason very few women were allowed to accompany the army; they were left at Ciudad Rodrigo, where so many had assembled to share in the spoils and pleasures of Lisbon with their friends and husbands, that the

*Massena  
advances  
into Portu-  
gal.*



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place, because of the round of gaieties which was there kept up, was called Little Paris. From thence they were to follow when the easy conquest should be completed ; and this was thought so certain, that engagements were made for parties to be given in the capital. With this confidence, and this levity of mind, the French entered upon their third invasion of Portugal. They began their march in three bodies, Junot's corps with the artillery and cavalry proceeding by Pinhel and Trancoso, Ney's by Alverca, and Regnier's by Guarda. At the same time, Lord Wellington, aware of the enemy's intent, began to retreat towards Coimbra deliberately, and with such evident forethought and determination, that this retrograde movement did not in the slightest degree abate the spirits of the army. No stores were abandoned, no men and horses foundered ; the operations were all performed with regularity and ease ; the soldiers suffered no privations, and underwent no unnecessary fatigue ; the inhabitants retired under their protection, and assisted them in breaking up the bridges, destroying the mills, and laying waste the country ; so that Massena found a desert as he advanced. In the town of Celorico there were only two inhabitants, and nothing but bare walls. At that place the corps of Regnier and Ney effected their junction. The appearance of the former made it evident that there was no intention of acting upon the Tagus ; and it appeared also,

*Ney and  
Regnier's  
corps join  
him at Celorico.*

upon their taking the road by Fornos, that it was Massena's intention to proceed upon the right side of the Mondego, not upon the left by way of Penalva and Ponte de Murcella, where he thought Lord Wellington would be prepared to resist him in a strong position: he calculated upon turning this position, and so making himself master of Coimbra and the resources which the fertile country about that city would supply. But he did not calculate upon the foresight and decision of the British General, nor upon the spirit of the Portuguese people: he hoped to delude them by promises, and to find them as he advanced remaining patiently in their towns and villages, in expectation of the conquest which awaited them. With this intent he gave orders that the troops should halt before they entered Viseu, till the inhabitants might be assured of protection for themselves and their property. No persons were found abroad there; the soldiers were still forbidden to enter any house forcibly on pain of severe punishment, and Massena himself remained a while in the streets, expecting the effect of his condescending patience. Night was setting in, and the word was at length given that the soldiers might quarter themselves. The doors were presently broken open, . . but neither inhabitants nor provisions were there; every thing had been carried away, all had fled; even no lights were to be found, except those which were burning in the churches. The only living

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*September.**Sept. 20.*

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*September.*

souls remaining there were a few poor wretches in the hospital, who were in too pitiable a state for removal: one medical attendant had been left with them; he also had fled upon the entrance of the French, but upon the information of his patients he was pursued and overtaken, and ordered to continue at his post, and assure the town's-people when they ventured back that no ill treatment was to be apprehended from the French conquerors.

*The French  
army col-  
lected at  
Viseu.*

Here Junot, with the artillery and cavalry, joined the army; but this junction, which completed the concentration of the French force, was impeded by Colonel Trant with some Portuguese militia and dragoons, who attacked the convoy near Tojal. Had this enterprise been executed as well as it was planned and timed, a blow might have been inflicted which the enemy would have felt severely; but the French, by their prompt discipline and judicious boldness, deterred the militia from pursuing their success,

*Jones's Ac-  
count of the  
War, i.  
297.*

and the park fell back on Trancoso. This delay, however, was no light advantage for the allies: it compelled Massena to remain two days at Viseu waiting for his artillery, and the time thus gained enabled Lord Wellington to collect his force upon the ground whereon, now that Massena's movements were foreseen, he had determined to withstand him.

*Lord Wel-  
lington  
crosses to  
the Serra  
de Busaco.  
Sept. 21.*

On the day after the French commander arrived at Viseu, General Hill joined the British army at Ponte de Murcella; the bridge was de-

stroyed, and he was left there with his division, while the rest of the army crossed the Mondego, and Lord Wellington himself proceeded to the Serra de Busaco, a mountainous ridge eight miles in length, and terminating precipitously on the Mondego; the Serra de Murella, in like manner, terminating on the opposite bank. By daylight on the following morning the light division and the cavalry, with General Pack's Portuguese brigade, assembled in the plain of Mortagoa, having their picquets upon the Criz; the bridge over that little river was destroyed. That day the enemy appeared in sight, and on the morrow, about three in the afternoon, drove in the picquets; some skirmishing ensued, the allies retreated to the rear of the plain, and at night began their march over the Serra. The place appointed for their bivouac was on the other side, two leagues distant, but the acclivity was so steep, that owing to this cause, and to the impediment occasioned by the breaking down of some artillery waggon, they did not reach it till it was daylight. It was generally supposed in the army at this time that no stand would be made, but Lord Wellington's determination soon became apparent. Had his army indeed been numerous enough to have occupied the whole ridge, no enemy could have ventured to attack him there, the ascent being too steep for cavalry, and the height of the position above the ground in its front such as to render the use of artillery

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*September.*

on the part of the assailants almost unavailing : occupied as it was, it was impregnable. The general elevation of the ridge is from nine to twelve hundred feet, and it is crossed by two roads, both leading from the north to Coimbra, the one passing near the convent, the other about a league to the southward.

*Busaco.*

Busaco, which was now to become famous in British and Portuguese history, had long been a venerable name in Portugal. It is the only place in that kingdom where the barefooted Carmelites possessed what in monastic language is called a desert ; by which term an establishment is designated where those brethren whose piety flies the highest pitch may at once enjoy the advantages of the eremite and the discipline of the cœnobite life, and thus indulge the heroism of ascetic devotion in security. The convent, surrounded by an extensive and almost impervious wood, stands in what may be called the crater of the loftiest part of the ridge : its precincts, which included a circumference of about four miles, were walled in. Within that circuit were various chapels and religious stations ; and on the summit of the mountain, which is within the inclosure, a stone cross was erected of enormous size, upon so huge a foundation, that three thousand cart-loads of stone were employed in constructing its base. The cells of the brethren were round the church\*,

*General  
Mackin-  
non's Jour-  
nal, p. 74.*

\* The author of *Der Feldzug von Portugal in den Jahren 1811*

not in a regular building, but accommodated to the irregularities of the ground, and lined with cork, which was every where used instead of wood because of the dampness of the situation. Every cell had its garden and its water-course for irrigating it, the cultivation of these little spots being the only recreation which the inhabitants allowed themselves as lawful. In one of these gardens the first cedars which grew in Portugal were raised. It was indeed one of those places where man has converted an earthly Paradise into a Purgatory for himself, but where superstition almost seems sanctified by every thing around it. Lord Wellington's headquarters were in the convent; and the solitude and silence of Busaco were now broken by events, in which its hermits, dead as they were to the world, might be permitted to partake all the agitations of earthly hope and fear.

On the 26th Generals Hill and Leith joined the army. This corps had made so rapid and arduous a march, that Massena regarded its junction as impossible, and reckoned therefore that the force which he wished to attack must necessarily be weak in front, if indeed Lord Wellington should venture to give him battle. That general arrived on the same day at Mortagoa, and the bridge over the Criz was re-established for his artillery, the army having crossed at a ford a little way above. Some

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und 1812 (*Stutgard und Tubingen*, 1816) is mistaken in calling it the burial-place of the kings of Portugal.

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*Relaçom da  
Campanha  
de Mas-  
sena. In-  
vestigador  
Portuguez,  
vol. vi. 59.*

*Battle of  
Busaco.  
Sept. 27.*

skirmishing took place, and at S. Antonio do Cantaro the French were resisted in a manner which made them first apprehend that a determined stand was to be made against them. Massena himself upon this reconnoitred the position, after which he asked one of the unworthy Portugueze who accompanied him, if he thought the allies would give him battle? He was answered, that undoubtedly they would, seeing they showed themselves in such strength. The French Marshal replied, I cannot persuade myself that Lord Wellington will risk the loss of his reputation; but if he does, . . . I have him! To-morrow we shall effect the conquest of Portugal; and in a few days I shall drown the leopard!

About two on the following morning the French army was in motion. Ney's corps formed in close column on the right, at the foot of the hill, and on the road which leads to the convent; Regnier's on the left, upon the southern road which passes by S. Antonio do Cantaro; Junot's was in the centre, and in reserve; the cavalry was in the rear, the ground not permitting it to act. The allied British and Portugueze army was posted along the ridge of the Serra, forming the segment of a circle, the extreme points of which embraced every part of the enemy's position, and from whence every movement on their part could be immediately observed. The troops had bivouacked that night in position, as they stood: Lord Welling-

ton in the wood near the centre, the general officers at the heads of their divisions and brigades. The orders were that all should stand to their arms before daylight; and the whole army were in high spirits, deeming themselves sure of an action, and of success. Before day-break the rattling of the enemy's carriages was heard, and a few of their guns were brought to fire upon a smaller number of British ones which had been placed to command the road. At dawn the action began on the right, and after some firing by the light troops in advance of the position, the enemy attacked a village which was in front of the light division, and which, though its possession was of advantage to the French, Lord Wellington chose rather to let them occupy, than suffer an action to be brought on upon less favourable ground than that which he had chosen, and where he was sure of success. The nature of the ground, upon which this assurance was founded, facilitated the enemy's movements to a certain degree, but no farther; its steepness and its inequalities covered their ascent, and they gained the summit with little loss. Regnier's corps was the first that was seriously engaged: it ascended at a part where there were only a few light troops; and being thus enabled to deploy without opposition, the French possessed themselves for a moment, in considerable strength, of a point within the line. Their first column was received by the 88th regiment alone, part

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*September.*

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of Major-General Mackinnon's brigade, which was presently reinforced by half the 45th, and soon afterwards by the 8th Portuguese: their second found the 74th, with the 9th and 21st Portuguese, ready to receive them on the right. Being repulsed there, they tried the centre with no better fortune; the remainder of Major-General Picton's division coming up, he charged them with the bayonet, and dislodged them, greatly superior in numbers as they were, from the strong ground which they had gained; at the same time, Major-General Leith arriving with a brigade on their flank, joined in the charge, and they were driven down the hill with great slaughter, leaving 700 dead upon the ground. Few prisoners were taken.

Marshal Ney meantime was not more fortunate with his division. Part of it he formed in column of mass, and ordered it to ascend upon the right of the village which he had occupied. They came up in the best possible order, though not without suffering considerably from the light infantry; the ground, however, covered them in part by its steepness. Major-General Craufurd, who commanded on that side, judiciously made his troops withdraw just behind the crest of the ridge whereon they were formed: he himself remained in front, on horseback, observing the enemy. No sooner had they reached the summit than the guns of his division opened a destructive fire upon them; and the men appearing suddenly at a distance only of some

twenty paces, advanced and charged. Instantly the French were broken: the foremost regiments of the column were almost destroyed, and those who escaped fled down the steep declivity, running, sliding, or rolling, as they could. General Simon, who commanded the column, was wounded and taken. Massena was now convinced that the attack could not succeed, and therefore halted the support at the foot of the hill. He endeavoured to decoy Lord Wellington out of a position which had been proved impregnable; but the British commander persisted in the sure system on which he had resolved, and the remainder of the day was employed in skirmishing between the light troops. They were directed to retire when pressed, and give the enemy an opportunity of repeating the attack. But the enemy had received too severe a lesson to venture upon a repetition, and as night approached they were drawn off to some distance, near the ground where Junot and the reserve were stationed. The village which they had been allowed to occupy in the morning still remained in their possession. Major-General Craufurd sent to the officer who commanded there, saying it was necessary for his corps, and requiring him to abandon it. The reply was, that he would die in defence of the post with which he was intrusted. This tone was neither called for by the occasion nor justified by the event. Six guns were immediately opened upon him; some companies of the 43d

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*September.**Memoirs of  
the Early  
Cam-  
paigns,  
171.*

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*Behaviour  
of the Por-  
tuguese  
troops.*

and of the Rifle Corps were ordered to charge the village; the French were instantly driven out, and the advanced post of the light division resumed possession.

Victories of greater result at the time have been gained in Portugal, but never was a battle fought there of more eventual importance to the Portuguese nation; for the Portuguese troops, whom the French despised, whom the enemies of the ministry in England reviled, and whom perhaps many of the British army till then mistrusted, established that day their character both for courage\* and for discipline, and proved, that however the government and the institutions of that kingdom had been perverted and debased, the people had not degenerated. Lord Wellington bore testimony to their deserts: he declared that he had never seen a more gallant attack than that which they made upon the enemy who had reached the ridge of the Serra; they were worthy, he said, of contending in the same ranks with the British troops in that good cause, which they afforded the best hopes of saving. Marshal Beresford bestowed high and deserved praise upon them in general orders; and the opportunity was taken of granting a free pardon to all who were under arrest for military offences, that they might rejoin their

\* Some of the Portuguese charging a superior force got so wedged in among the French, that they had not room to use their bayonets; they turned up the butt ends of their muskets, and plied them with such vigour, that they presently cleared the way.

regiments, and emulate their comrades, to whose good conduct they were indebted for this forgiveness; but persons who had been apprehended for robbery or murder were excepted from the amnesty, for these, it was properly observed, were not to be considered merely as military crimes. After this battle, the knighthood of the Bath was conferred on Marshal Beresford, in consideration of those exertions by which the Portuguese troops had been qualified to bear their part in it so honourably \*.

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The loss of the British in this memorable action amounted to 107 killed, 493 wounded, and thirty-one taken; that of the Portuguese to 90 killed, 512 wounded, and twenty taken. One French general, three colonels, thirty-three officers, and 250 men were made prisoners; 2000 were left dead on the field; the number was ascertained, because Massena sent a flag of truce requesting permission to bury them; it was not thought proper to comply with the request, and they were buried by the conquerors. Most of their wounded, who were very numerous†, were left to the mercy of the peasants; General Craufurd, whose division was the last that withdrew from the Serra, saved as many as he could from their hands, and lodged them in the convent. Un-

\* Ten ensigns' commissions were sent out after this action by the commander-in-chief to Lord Wellington, as rewards for the same number of non-commissioned officers who had distinguished themselves.

† The Portuguese officer who was with Massena, and whose journal is printed in the *Investigador Portuguez*, states the number of killed and wounded whom the French left on the ground at 4600.

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*Massena  
marches in-  
to the Porto  
road.*

ground maize was found in the knapsacks of the French.

Massena having in person directed the operations of the day, had purchased at some cost the conviction that his boast was not here to be realized. He consulted with Ney, Regnier, Junot, and Freirion; and they called in the Portuguese traitors to inquire of them by what course a position might be turned, which they found themselves unable to force. None of these unworthy men happened to be acquainted with that part of the country; the French commander turned from them in evident displeasure, as if they ought to have possessed the information of which he stood in need, and he ordered General Montbrun out with a strong detachment to explore the ways, telling him to send Generals St. Croix and Lamotte in different directions on the same service. On the following day two peasants were brought in; promises could draw nothing from them, but they yielded to threats of torture and death, and informed the enemy that there was a pass\* over the Serra de Caramula, communicating with the great road between Porto and Coimbra, and coming into it near Sardam. By this course Massena immediately determined to proceed. There had been skirmishing throughout the morning between the light troops; the better to conceal their movements, the French set fire to the

\* There are in fact three passes over this Serra, all of them practicable for cavalry.

woods ; but the summit of Busaco commands a most extensive prospect over the whole country\* : early in the afternoon a large body of their horse and foot was observed in motion from the left of their centre to the rear, and from thence their cavalry were seen in march along the road leading from Mortagoa, over the mountain, toward Porto. Lord Wellington at once apprehended their purpose, and perceived that it was now too late to prevent or to impede it.

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Orders had been dispatched from the Ponte de Murcella on the 19th to Colonel Trant, who was then acting as Brigadier with some Portuguese militia, that he should occupy the villages of Sardam and Aguada. The division which he commanded formed part of the force under General Bacellar, who was then at Moimenta da Beira, and whose instructions were to consider the defence of the Douro, and more especially of Porto as his principal object. The orders were that Trant should march by S. Pedro do Sul, which was the nearest line, but the worst road, and through a country exhausted of provisions, in consequence of the passage of the enemy by Viseu, and the abandonment of the intermediate district by its inhabitants. Partly for these considerations General Bacellar directed him to make a circuit by Porto, but chiefly because he had ascertained that a French

Colonel  
Trant's  
movements.

\* Cardoso says, that to the east the Serra de Castello Rodrigo may be distinguished, which is thirty leagues off, the Serra de Minde to the south, and that of Grijo to the north, fifteen leagues distant. Westward is the mouth of the Mondego and the coast.

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*September.*

*Sept. 28.*

detachment of 1500 men had entered S. Pedro; and because he considered it his main business to provide for the protection of Porto, which he also supposed to be Lord Wellington's object in ordering this movement. Trant proposed to attack the enemy at S. Pedro, and force his way, if possible; Bacellar would not permit him to make the attempt, because he thought it too hazardous for troops like his; and Trant in consequence took the circuitous route. He left his men near the points which he had been instructed to occupy, early on the morning after the battle, and proceeded to the head-quarters at Busaco, where he arrived before eleven in the forenoon, and was then first apprized that it had been intended he should occupy the village of Boyalva, and defend the pass over the Serra de Caramula. He offered instantly to return and occupy the intended ground; and there was time for doing it, but the offer was declined. Lord Wellington had not detached any part of his own army to these passes, because in case of failure, the troops must have been cut off from the main body; whereas the Portuguese, if compelled to retire, might fall back upon Porto, according to their destination. Had the ground been stronger than it was, it was not to be supposed that 1500 militia could maintain it against Massena's army; for to that number Trant's force was reduced, the men having marched 190 miles in nine successive days, and many, while traversing the district in which they were

raised, had absented themselves, without leave, to revisit their families. They might possibly have held it long enough to bring on a general action, if Lord Wellington had thought it advisable again to venture one; but the same motives which withheld him from giving battle for the relief of Ciudad Rodrigo, or Almeida, influenced him still: he had indeed more confidence in the Portuguese troops, but the other reasons existed in their full strength: adhering to his long concerted plans, which were laid for sure though slow success, he determined upon committing nothing to the mere fortune of war; Trant therefore returned to Sardam, to act as opportunity might offer, and Lord Wellington during the night withdrew his army from Busaco. General Hill recrossed the Mondego, retiring toward Santarem by way of Thomar, and Lord Wellington marched on Coimbra, leaving Craufurd with a few piquets on the Serra, where he performed the humane office of providing for the wounded French, who had been abandoned by their countrymen, for want of means to remove them.

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September.*The allies  
withdraw  
from Bu-  
saco.*

On the evening of the 28th the enemy's cavalry entered Boyalva, driving in a piquet of the Light Dragoons. It is an open village, on the western slope of the hill, where there is no defile, and where the ground is not broken. Trant was then at Sardam, where, during the following day and night, he occupied one half the united villages, the enemy's cavalry occu-

*Trant re-  
treats to the  
Vouga.*



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*September.*

pying the other. As he could no longer be of service here, and was aware that he should be attacked in the course of the day if he remained longer, early on the 30th he resolved to retire behind the Vouga. La Croix, who, with a column of horse, was scouring the country upon the right flank of the invading army, fell in with his outposts, attacked them, and drove them in with the loss of one officer and five-and-twenty men\*. The infantry, by good fortune, had effected their passage; they formed in defence of the bridge, and La Croix having no infantry, did not attempt to force it. The Vouga was at this time fordable, and therefore Trant marched in the night to Oliveira, on the Porto road, from whence, if it should be necessary, he could in one day reach the Douro, and cross it for the defence of that city. There were then no other troops to defend it, and if the enemy had pursued, Porto might have been a second time in their power. That this was not done is not surprising, because it did not consist with the scheme of Massena's operations; but that the French should have neglected so fair an opportunity of dispersing Trant's force, which if not dispersed might be expected presently to harass their rear, must be accounted among those errors with which the whole course of human events is marked, and in which the religious mind perceives the superintendence of a higher power than man.

\* A loss which was magnified to 500 in Massena's dispatches.

The allies being on the shorter line to Coimbra, were sufficiently in advance of the enemy for all their movements to be conducted with the same coolness and order which had characterized the whole retreat. On the 30th the infantry crossed from Coimbra into the great Lisbon road. The rear-guard of cavalry bivouacked in front of Fornos, and remained bridled up all night, in a very dangerous situation, the enemy having pushed a strong force close to them. In the morning they were driven in some confusion through Fornos by a large body of horse and foot: they formed on the great plain of Coimbra, and the French seeing the three brigades of cavalry with six guns of the horse artillery ready to receive them, did not venture to leave the inclosures. Before noon the rear-guard received orders to retire, and crossed the Mondego accordingly at the fords near S. Martinho do Bispo. The enemy pushed on their horse, came up just as the passage had been effected, and attempted to cross, as if in pursuit: they were charged, and driven back by a squadron of the 16th, after which they dismounted, and fired with their carbines ineffectually across the river. The passage might have been defended with good prospect of success, but this was not consistent with Lord Wellington's plans, which were to draw the French to a point where they should be at the greatest distance from their resources, and where his own would be at hand.

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*September.**The allies  
cross the  
Mondego.**Oct. 1.*

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*Flight of  
the inhabit-  
ants from  
Coimbra.*

When it was known in Coimbra that the enemy were approaching, and the retreat of the British made it evident that the city would be at their mercy, a cry soon arose that the French had actually entered, and the whole of the inhabitants who had not yet provided for their safety ran shrieking toward the bridge. On all other sides they were cut off from flight. The bridge, which is long and narrow, was presently choked by the crowd of fugitives; and multitudes in the hurry of their fear rushed into the Mondego, and made their way through the water, which was in many parts three or four feet deep. The gateway, which was the city prison, is near the bridge, and the screams of the prisoners, who beheld this scene of terror from their grates, and expected something far more dreadful from the cruelty of the French than they had reason to apprehend from the laws of their own country, were heard amid all the uproar and confusion. Lord Wellington heard them, and in compassion sent his aide-de-camp, Lord March, to set them at liberty.

*The French  
enter Coim-  
bra.*

Massena expected to find great resources in Coimbra, a large and flourishing city situated in the finest part of a beautiful and fertile country. He found it utterly deserted, like every place which the French had hitherto entered on their march. With the intent of securing the stores, he forbade all pillage, and gave orders that only the brigade which was to be left in garrison there should enter. In defiance of these orders

Junot commanded his men to make their way in, and break open the houses, as the owners had thought proper to abandon them. Such directions were eagerly obeyed ; the men forced the guard, which, in pursuance of Massena's instructions, had been stationed at the gate of S. Sophia ; the other troops immediately joined them in their occupation, and Massena neither attempted to enforce his own orders, nor manifested any displeasure during the scene of wanton waste and havoc which ensued. The magazines of the allied army had been removed, and Montbrun, who was dispatched to Figueira for the chance of overtaking them there, arrived too late : but provision enough, it is said, was found in Coimbra to have served the enemy for a month's consumption, if proper measures had been adopted for its preservation. The people who so unanimously forsook their homes had had neither time nor means for removing their property. So long as it was uncertain in which direction the invaders would move, and while a possibility remained that they might be successfully resisted upon the way, the people of Coimbra had lived in hope that this dire necessity might be averted ; and when it came upon them, so many cars were required for the sick and wounded, and other services of the enemy, that few or none were left for them.

It is the custom throughout the south of India, that when a hostile army approaches, the natives bury their treasure, forsake their

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*The Portuguese people fly before the enemy.*

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houses, take with them as much food as they can carry, and seek the protection of some strong place, or conceal themselves among the woods and mountains. People in these deplorable circumstances are called the Wulsa of the district. The Wulsa has never been known to depart on the approach of a British force, if unaccompanied by Indian allies. This, however, is no peculiar honour of the British name; it belongs rather to the European character, for no such spectacle had ever been exhibited in European warfare till the present campaign. The orders of the Regency and of the commander-in-chief might have been issued in vain, if the Portuguese people had not from cruel experience felt the necessity of this measure for their individual safety. The alternative was dreadful, and yet better than that of remaining at the mercy of such invaders. It was a miserable sight to see them accompanying the columns of the retreating army, well-ordered as the movements of that army were, and resolutely, as on the few occasions which were offered, it met and checked the pursuers. All ranks and conditions were confounded in the general calamity: families accustomed to the comforts of a delightful climate and fruitful country followed the troops on foot; there was no security for age, or sex, or childhood, but in flight\*. Every thing was

\* The under-gardener of the Botanical Garden at Coimbra, with his family, consisting of his wife (a young woman of eighteen, with an infant at the breast) and her mother, having tarried too long to accompany the army, was overtaken in the little town of

left behind them except what the women could carry ; for even in this extremity the men very generally observed the national prejudice, which deems it disgraceful for man to bear a burthen.

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Boastful as the French commander was, and confident in his own fortune, and in the hitherto unchecked prosperity of the Emperor Napoleon, the battle of Busaco made him apprehend that the enterprise in which he had engaged was not so easy as he had imagined, nor so free from all risk of disasters. There were not fewer than 5000 sick and wounded whom it was necessary to leave at Coimbra ; as many more had been left at Busaco dead on the field, or abandoned

*Hopes and  
expect-  
ations of  
the French.*

Soure by some stragglers from the enemy's advanced guard, who were in search of plunder. These miscreants secured the husband by fastening his hands behind him : they tied the mother in the same manner ; the villain then, to whom the wife was allotted, either by agreement among them, or by virtue of his authority, endeavoured to tear the infant from her arms, that he might proceed to violate her in presence of her mother and her husband. Failing in this, and enraged at a resistance which he had not expected, he drew back a few yards, presented his musket, and swore he would fire at her if she did not yield. " Fire, devil !" was her immediate reply, and at the word she and her infant fell by the same shot. The ruffians stripped her body, and compelled the husband to carry the clothes on his back to Thomar, whither they carried him prisoner. During his detention there he pointed out the mur-

derer to a Portuguese nobleman then serving with Massena ; but whatever this traitor may have felt at the crime, he did not venture to report it to the French commander, and demand justice upon the criminal : the hopes of co-operation on the part of the Portuguese people which he had held out had been proved so utterly false, that Massena treated him with contemptuous dislike, and moreover every thing was permitted to their soldiers by the French generals in that atrocious campaign. The gardener effected his escape to Coimbra, where a subscription was raised for him, but he soon died, broken-hearted. The man himself related this tragedy to the British officer, from whom I received it. It is recorded here as an example of the spirit which the invaders frequently found in those Portuguese women who were unfortunate enough to fall into their hands.

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there because their condition was hopeless, or for want of means to remove them. But a loss of 10,000 men upon his march, without any commensurate diminution of the allies, had not been allowed for in his calculations; and he found himself unable to leave a guard of sufficient strength at Coimbra, without weakening his army too much. He thought therefore that the surest course by which he could secure his sick and wounded was to pursue the English with all his force, and drive them out of the country, for he still persuaded himself that they were flying to their ships. This opinion he expressed in dispatches which were intercepted. The other generals partook the same delusion; they no longer despised the British troops, but they had not yet been taught to respect the councils of the British government, and the nature of its policy they could neither believe nor comprehend; for it appeared to them incredible that any government should act upon principles of integrity and honour. They supposed that Lord Wellington would embark as soon as he reached Lisbon, and that it was his intention to carry off as many of the Portuguese youth as he could get on board, by way of securing some compensation for the expenses of the war!

*Confusion  
at Con-  
deira.*

With these expectations they followed the retreating army, not with the ardour of pursuit, but ready to avail themselves of any opportunity that might present itself, and cautious how they offered any to an enemy whom they no longer

affected to despise. The single occasion which occurred in their favour they were not near enough to seize. It was at Condeixa (the Conimbrica of the Romans); the town is built on the ridge of the hill, and the road passes through it along a narrow street; the people of the vicinity crowded in simultaneously with the troops, and the inhabitants at the same time hurried to join in a retreat which they had delayed till the last minute. They were in great alarm, the way was blocked up by some of the country carts, and had it not been for the good discipline which the troops observed in this scene of confusion, and the exertions of the officers, the enemy might have obtained no inconsiderable advantage. But they were not near enough to profit by the favourable opportunity: order was restored in time; and this was the only moment of serious danger during the whole retreat. Massena pushed forward to this town, without halting at Coimbra; but he found it necessary to remain here three days, for the purpose of resting his troops and collecting such provisions as the inhabitants had not been able to remove, and the retreating army had left untouched. As the enemy advanced, the allies retired a march or two before them; the infantry proceeded with as little molestation as if they had been marching through a country which was in peace; the cavalry covered the retreat, and no stragglers were to be seen.

Some skirmishing took place near Pombal, *Leiria forsaken.*

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Oct. 5.

*Alcobaça  
forsaken by  
the monks.*

with trifling loss on the part of the allies, and more on that of the enemy. Ney and Junot took this line of march, while Regnier advanced upon the road to Thomar. Leiria was forsaken by its whole population: a city thus deserted offered such temptation, that discipline could not be maintained in the retreating army without some examples of severity, and one British and one native soldier were punished with death for breaking into a chapel and plundering it. Here the allied army divided, one part taking the road to Alcobaça, the other to Rio Mayor. The monks of Alcobaça performed on this occasion toward the British officers their last act of hospitality. Most of them had already departed from the magnificent and ancient abode, where the greater part of their lives had been spent peacefully and inoffensively, to seek an asylum where they could; the few who remained prepared dinner for their guests in the great hall and in the apartments reserved for strangers, after which they brought them the keys, and desired them to take whatever they liked, . . . for they expected that every thing would be destroyed by the French. Means were afforded them, through General Mackinnon's kindness, for saving some things which they could not otherwise have removed; and then the most venerable edifice in Portugal for its antiquity, its history, its literary treasures, and the tombs which it contained, was abandoned to an invader who delighted in defiling whatever was held sa-

cred, and in destroying whatever a generous enemy, from the impulse of feeling and the sense of honour, would carefully have preserved.

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The rains now commenced, and set in with their accustomed severity in that country. By this time the infantry had reached their positions; but the cavalry who covered the rear were exposed to the whole severity of the weather, bivouacking every night, because the enemy were so close that it would have been imprudent for them to occupy a village. Sir Stapleton Cotton, however, having reached the little town of Alcoentre, took up his quarters there; the French, expecting that in this heavy and incessant rain the English would apprehend no enterprise on their part, took advantage of the weather, and endeavoured to surprise him there; his piquets were driven in; and almost as soon as the alarm could be given, they were in the town, and in possession of six guns. A squadron from the 16th came down in time, charged them in the street, recovered the guns, and drove them to the other end of the town. Some severe skirmishing occurred on the following day, in which the the 3d regiment of French hussars behaved most gallantly. At daybreak on the 10th the enemy had lost sight of the allies, and when they reached Moinho do Cubo, where the roads to Alenquer and Lisbon divide, they knew not which course to take. Two peasants were brought in by their detachments, and were asked which way the English had retreated, and where

*Surprise at  
Alcoentre.*

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discover the  
lines of the  
allies.**Investiga-  
dor Portu-  
gues, t. vi.  
64.*

their lines were, . . for by this time Massena had found cause to doubt whether a general who retreated so deliberately had no other intention than to embark and fly as soon as he reached Lisbon. The men answered that they could give no information on either point, because they knew nothing ; military punishment was immediately inflicted upon them, to extort what they were determined not to disclose, and they both endured it till they fainted, thus giving the French another proof of national resolution, and of the feeling of the Portuguese towards them. Being thus disappointed of the intelligence which they expected, the French vanguard, which consisted of 10,000 men, divided. The division which took the Alenquer road came in sight of a column of the allies on the heights beyond that town ; on the following day this column retreated in good order to Sobral, and was driven out of it : the French were pursuing their advantage when a peasant fell into their hands, who, unlike his countrymen, answered without hesitation all the interrogatories which were put to him ; he told the commander that they were close upon the British lines, and pointed out to him where the batteries were, in constructing which he had himself laboured. Had it not been for his warning, this body of the enemy would presently have been in a situation from which it could hardly have escaped. They halted instantly, and fell back ; Massena was informed of the discovery which

had been made ; and three days elapsed before the invaders again approached the works of the allies so nearly.

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*Feelings of  
the army.*

The army had commenced their retrograde movement from the frontiers with an impression that the cause wherein they were engaged had become hopeless, and that when they reached Lisbon they should be embarked, and abandon Portugal. This opinion had been altered by the course of events during the retreat, and by the manner in which that retreat had been conducted. There had been no alarm, no confusion, no precipitance upon the march. Nothing could have been conducted with greater ease to the troops ; not a straggler had been taken, not a gun abandoned, not an article of baggage lost ; the infantry had never even been seen by the enemy, except at Busaco, where they gave them battle, and signally defeated them : and the cavalry had taken on the way more prisoners from the enemy than the allies lost, a circumstance which probably never occurred in any former retreat. The troops, therefore, became confident that their commander had no thought of abandoning the contest ; and that an embarkation was not his object, but that he was acting upon some settled plan, which he was well able to carry to the end. But when they entered the lines which they were to occupy, their surprise was hardly less than that of Massena and his army, at the foresight which they there saw displayed, and the skill

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*The lines of  
Torres Vedras.*

with which a strong position had been rendered impregnable.

At the close of the last century Sir Charles Stuart had perceived that, if the French should ever seriously attempt the conquest of Portugal, here was the vantage ground of defence ; and Lord Wellington, in his campaign against Junot, had observed this part of the country at leisure, and came to the same conclusion. Portugal, he said in the House of Commons, could be defended, but not on the frontier ; the defence must be on the strong ground about Lisbon ; and that consideration, he added, was in his mind when the Convention of Cintra was made. As soon, therefore, as the impossibility of co-operating with the Spaniards to any good effect had been fully proved, and it became apparent that the decisive struggle must be made in Portugal, upon this ground he resolved to make it. Early in the year it was stated in the English newspapers that men were employed in fortifying this position, but no mention of it had subsequently appeared, and it is truly remarkable that works of such magnitude and importance should have been commenced and perfected without exciting the slightest attention during their progress. They extended from Alhandra on the Tagus to the mouth of the little river Sizandro : the direct line across the country between these points is about six-and-twenty miles ; the line of defence was about forty. All

roads which could have afforded any advantage to the enemy were destroyed, and others opened by which the allies might effect their communications with most facility. In some places, streams were dammed and inundations formed ; in others the sides of the ravines and hills were scarped perpendicularly ; intrenchments were thrown up wherever they could be serviceable ; every approach was commanded by cannon, placed in posts which had been rendered inaccessible ; and at all the most important points redoubts were erected capable of resisting even if the enemy should establish themselves in their rear, and well provided with stores and ammunition for defence.

These works, the most celebrated of their kind, were constructed under the direction of Lieutenant-Colonel Fletcher, of the engineers, assisted by Captain Chapman. Lieutenant-General Hill commanded on the right, having his head-quarters at Alhandra ; . . the great approach to Lisbon is on this side, but the ground is strong ; no means had been neglected for strengthening it, and gun-boats from the Tagus could assist in the defence. That river covered the right, the left was closed by the heights above Sobral, and communicated there with the corps of the centre. Major-General Picton commanded on the left ; his head-quarters were at Torres Vedras, a town which, being better known than any other included within the works, became for ever memorable in military history,

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by giving name to these formidable lines. The weakest part of the whole position was between Torres Vedras and the sea; but the artificial defences were proportionately strong, .. and where it would otherwise have been most accessible, it was rendered most secure by inundations extending some six miles along the Sizandro to the sea. The centre extended from the heights of Sobral de Monte Agraço to Torres Vedras: in the former little town Marshal Beresford had his head-quarters; Lord Wellington's were about two leagues from the latter, at the Quinta de Pero Negro, near Enxara dos Cavalleiros. The heights above Sobral formed the principal point of defence on this part of the line; and the villages of Ordasqueyra and Runa, which are upon the road between Sobral and Torres Vedras, were also strongly fortified, because they commanded the only pass to the latter town within Monte Junto. That mountain, which runs due north from Runa for some fourteen miles, contributed mainly to the strength of the position. It prevented all military communication between Sobral and Torres Vedras, except by the line which the allies occupied in strength. Lord Wellington might be attacked either from the east by Sobral, or by Torres Vedras from the west; but he could bring his troops from the one point to the other in a few hours, along a safe and easy communication; whereas for the enemy to have communicated between the same points would have required at

least two days, for they must have rounded the Serra at its northern point.

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In the rear of this line, and nearly parallel to it, at a distance of from six to eight miles, was a second fortified position; extending from behind Alverca to Bucellas, thence along the Seras to Montachique, by the park wall of Mafra to Gradil, and so along the heights to the mouth of a little stream called S. Lorenzo. Strong works covered the communication between these lines. And lest, contrary to all probabilities and human foresight, a position so fortified and occupied should be found untenable against the invaders, works were constructed at the mouth of the Tagus, at St. Julian's, which would have secured the embarkation of the troops. The heights at Almada, on the south of the Tagus, which command Lisbon and its anchorage, were also fortified, in case Mortier should carry into effect a co-operation on the side of Alentejo, which it was not doubted was part of the French plan. Ten thousand men, consisting in part of marines, were destined to serve in this quarter. The redoubts in the position were manned by Portuguese militia, who, with a certain number of regular troops, were quite equal to the duties which might be there required. The troops of the line, British and Portuguese, were thus disposable to act in moveable columns, and oppose the enemy wherever they might attempt to penetrate. The allies were joined here by

*Works at  
Almada.*



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*Romana  
joins the  
allies at  
Lisbon.*

Romana with 6000 Spaniards, from Extremadura ; here they might be efficiently employed, but in that quarter they could be of little service. Badajoz, which Romana had secured at the critical time, had now by his exertions been well provided and garrisoned, . . and this junction had been arranged as soon as it became certain that the decisive stand must be made in the lines of Torres Vedras.

The French had suffered severely from the weather during the latter days of their march, so that both horses and men were greatly exhausted when they arrived at the point where their advance was stopped. It was no easy task to reconnoitre these lines, many of the most important points being concealed behind the hills ; but Massena, after a careful inspection, saw enough to convince him, that if he attacked them a repulse might be expected, more fatal in its results than that which he had received at Busaco. And his hopes were not raised by the intelligence which now reached him of the consequences which that defeat had drawn after it. It was then perceived how great an error had been committed in not pursuing Colonel Trant beyond the Vouga, and dispersing the Portuguese militia under his command.

*Colonel  
Trant sur-  
prises the  
French in  
Coimbra.*

That officer, who well understood the weakness both of his forces and of his position, . . for the Vouga was at that time fordable, . . had retreated by a night march to Oliveira, not

without apprehension that the enemy would send a detachment against Porto, where they would have found no other troops to defend it than the small and ill disciplined body which he could have carried thither. When he had ascertained that this was not their purpose, but that the whole army was advancing in pursuit of Lord Wellington, and had left their wounded in Coimbra, he lost no time, but immediately concerted means for surprising them in that city. The Army of the North, as it was called, under Lieutenant-General Bacellar, consisted of three divisions of militia, .. that of Tras os Montes, under Silveira, that of the Minho, under Brigadier-General Miller, and that of Porto, under Trant. It had also two regiments of Portuguese cavalry and three brigades of field artillery, .. this constituted its whole force. When Trant was sent round by Porto to Sardam, the other divisions were disposed so as to close upon the enemy's rear ; and the advanced guard, under Colonel John Wilson, followed them through Vizeu, and along the lower falls of the Caramula, intercepting their communications and taking their stragglers. This body was near enough to see from a distance the action at Busaco ; and when Massena, withdrawing from thence, concentrated his army at Mortagoa, Colonel Wilson fell in with a detachment of his rear-guard, and in an affair of nearly equal numbers captured thirty mounted dragoons, and several infantry. As he proceeded

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he found the villages laid waste, and filled with the enemy's dead and dying ; and many of their wounded, falling into his hands, were committed to the surgeon's care, and saved from the death to which the invading army in its haste had abandoned them. With this officer, and with Brigadier-General Miller, Trant intended to combine his movements ; and having written to them, advanced from Oliveira to Mealhada, expecting to join them there, . . but the country through which they came had been completely wasted, so that the want of supplies, and the exhausted state of the horses, rendered it impossible for them to advance so rapidly as he had hoped. Delay would give the enemy leisure to prepare for defence, whereas it was probable that at this time they had no apprehension of an attack, and were ignorant that any troops were so near them : Mealhada is scarcely twelve miles from Coimbra, and by a rapid movement Trant thought he might be able with his own division to effect what, if time were lost and the French on their guard, the united bodies might find it difficult to accomplish. He determined, therefore, to proceed. At a little distance from Os Fornos he fell in with an enemy's detachment, pushed on his cavalry so as to cut them off from Coimbra, and made them all prisoners, except a few who fell before the others surrendered. Then he ordered his horse to advance at a gallop along the principal road, cross the bridge over the Mondego, and take

post on the Lisbon road, thus cutting off the communication between Massena's army and the garrison. While the cavalry were crossing, an irregular fire was kept up upon them from St. Clara's, a nunnery on the south of the river which the enemy occupied : as soon as the passage was effected, the French here proposed to capitulate ; but Trant would hear of no capitulation, . . they must surrender at discretion, he said, and he would exert all his means to protect them from the people. The infantry meantime entered the city ; and after a contest which continued about an hour, the French were made prisoners. Six or seven hundred convalescents thought themselves strong enough to defend the convent in which they were quartered, imprudently therefore they refused to surrender : the building was presently stormed, and most of them fell victims to Portuguese vengeance.

Colonel Trant found more difficulty in protecting the French than in taking them prisoners. The militia and armed peasantry under his command were exasperated almost to madness by the conduct of an enemy whose route from Pinhel might be traced by the smoke of burning villages. Coimbra itself presented a spectacle sufficient to excite the bitterest feelings of indignation. The French had ransacked every house, and church, and public building ; they had for pure wantonness set fire to some of the houses, and they had heaped up promiscuously in the streets all the provisions which

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his prisoners  
to Porto.*

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the army could not carry with it. Enough had been found in shops, and private houses, and in the convents of that populous and flourishing city, to have supplied the army for no inconsiderable time, if it had been collected in magazines: but Massena relied upon having the resources of Lisbon at his disposal; and the commissary-general, whom he had left as governor in Coimbra, however well he understood the importance of preserving the stores which had here fallen into his hands, was unable to restrain a soldiery, who from the commencement of the war had been permitted to indulge in licenses of every kind. About 800 of Trant's men were natives of Coimbra or its district; not a few of the inhabitants, upon the recovery of the city, appeared from their hiding-places: the enemy had been surprised and taken in the very act of havoc; and nothing but the greatest exertions on the part of Trant, and the respect with which he was regarded, could have saved the prisoners from the vengeance of those who, in addition to their strong national feeling, were under the sense of private and present injuries, and those of the deepest kind. For though the greater part of the population had taken flight, in so populous a city there had been many for whom flight was impossible, . . age and sickness had detained some: others were bound by duty to the sick and aged; and others again, under the fear of casting themselves upon the world as wanderers, and the hope that by remaining

with their property they might preserve a part at least, had waited for the evil under their own roofs, or hesitated whither to fly, till it had been too late; and these unhappy persons had found no protection from the established laws of war, or the common usages of humanity. Under these circumstances there was no other means of preserving the prisoners but by marching them to Porto. Brigadier Miller and Colonel Wilson, who had formed a junction on the day that Trant's dispatches reached them, having pushed on with all speed to support him in his attempt, arrived at Coimbra a few hours after him. Leaving them therefore in the city with part of his brigade, with the other he convoyed 4000 of the French, going himself to protect them, as well knowing that, unless he were present, they would never reach Porto alive, . . . for his men had been raised in that country, which was the scene of Soult's cruelties, and some of them were from that village of Arrifana, where horrors had been perpetrated of which the military murders committed under General Thomieres' orders were the least part.

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p. 269.*

Above 150 officers and 5000 men were made prisoners by this well-timed enterprise; 3500 muskets were taken, nearly the whole of which were charged; and hence the number of effective men may be estimated. A great number of kine and sheep were found, which the enemy had collected; had they crossed the Vouga they might have carried off from 2000 to 3000 head

*Difficulties  
of Mas-  
sona's situ-  
ation.*

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of cattle in one or two days' sweep of the country between that river and the Douro. In the commissariat, as well as in the hospital department, Massena suffered a loss here which was severely felt; the capture of his wounded under such circumstances was not more mortifying to him than the disappointment was painful of those hopes which he had founded upon the possession of Coimbra. Instead of having a garrison in that important quarter, occupied in collecting for him the resources of a fertile country, and facilitating his intercourse with Spain, his communications were now impeded; he was cut off from Beira and the northern provinces; the Portuguese, encouraged by success, were acting in his rear, and in front there was a formidable force in a position, which he soon perceived it would be hopeless to attack. He had no other means of subsistence for his army than what might be procured by force, and any reinforcement must be strong enough to fight its way from the very frontier of France, for a small party could nowhere pass in safety. But the sea was open to the allies; . . . every day witnessed the arrival of supplies and stores in the Tagus, and it was reasonably to be expected that Lord Wellington would soon receive reinforcements enough for enabling him to act upon the offensive. Massena felt now the difficulties of the situation in which his own confidence and that of Buonaparte had placed him. But he manifested no sense of weakness; and having

well reconnoitred the right of the lines, he placed his three corps separately in bivouac in front of it, and determined, but with due caution, to make at least a trial of that fortune which had never failed him till he was opposed to British enemies.

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There was a redoubt in an important point of the position, at the foot of the heights above Sobral; opposite to this, at a little distance, the French established one, and Massena having strictly observed the ground, gave orders for attacking the British redoubt, and took his station on a hill to see the issue of this his first operation. The Honourable Colonel Cadogan of the 73d commanded there, and not only were the enemy repulsed, but there own redoubt was attacked, carried, and maintained. Convinced by the trial how little was to be hoped from any bolder measures, Massena ventured no farther. To cover his own plans, he still however maintained his position, and made such demonstrations, that the allies were daily under arms before daylight, with their general-in-chief ready to direct their operations, expecting and hoping that a general attack might be made, and in full assurance that it could only end in the defeat and destruction of the enemy. But the French commander was not now so confident in his own troops, nor so ignorant of those to whom he was opposed, as to incur the danger of a defeat which must have been irreparable. The demonstration was made for the purpose of covering cer-

*His demonstrations in front of the lines.*

*Early Campaigns, 191.*

*Colonel Jones's Account, i. 308.*



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*Montbrun  
sent against  
Abrantes.*

tain movements in his rear, and after a week of anxious and eager hope, the allies were convinced that no attempt would be made to force their inexpugnable position.

Having consulted with Marshal Ney, Regnier, Junot, and Montbrun, Massena determined upon sending to Buonaparte to request reinforcements, and taking a position in the interior of Portugal till they should arrive. As a preparatory measure, Montbrun was sent with the advanced guard, and with Loison's division to occupy Abrantes. Meantime he established his head-quarters at Alenquer, those of Regnier's corps were at Villa Franca, of Junot's opposite to Sobral, and of Ney's in front of Torres Vedras. Montbrun was detained two days at Santarem by an inundation of the Tagus, which covered the Campos de Golegam; as soon as the waters had retired, he advanced to Barquinha; that place, like Santarem, was deserted, but the inhabitants, relying too much upon protection from Abrantes, and from the river, had collected large magazines there, which they had now no time for removing. When he reached the Zezere, thinking to cross at Punhete, he found that the bridge of boats had been destroyed, and that a detachment from the garrison of Abrantes was entrenched in the town, which stands on the left bank. The Zezere is at all times a rapid and formidable stream; at that season it was nowhere fordable; the banks are high and difficult, and after consulting with

the other generals, Montbrun determined to set the town on fire, that, under cover of the conflagration, he might throw a bridge across, and effect his passage: this resolution was taken at night; in the morning it was found that the allies had withdrawn; the river was then bridged without opposition, and the enemy advanced upon Abrantes. But that city was well provided against any sudden attack; and the French, perceiving that nothing was to be done there, retired to Punhete, and Barquinha, and Golegam. Montbrun's next orders were to take possession of Torres Novas and Thomar. Colonel Wilson had been instructed to proceed with his corps of militia towards these towns, for the purpose of confining the enemy's detachments on that side; but he, and Trant, and Miller, were charged always to keep in view the necessity of preserving their communication with the Lower Douro. Wilson, after the recapture of Coimbra, had followed the enemy through Leiria, and afterwards occupied the road from Ponte de Murcella to Thomar. But this town had been taken possession of by Montbrun, and there and at Torres Novas stores were found which relieved for a while the distress of the invaders, who depended for their subsistence entirely upon what they could find.

It was because Massena was too strong in numbers to be beaten without a greater expense of lives than Lord Wellington could then afford, that the British commander trusted to

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*The French  
army sub-  
sists by  
plunder.*

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famine, and to that worrying system of national warfare which no army can withstand. Famine would soon and surely have compelled the invaders to retreat if the orders of the Regency had been duly observed, and the country completely cleared of all stores before the enemy approached. But the local magistrates had not taken effectual measures for enforcing these orders; while the danger was at a distance, they had continued to hope it might be averted, or at least that it would not reach their particular districts; and in very many places the farmers had secreted their stores, that they might not be constrained to sell them to the commissioners at a low price and at long credit. The precautionary measures of the government were so far carried into effect, that the enemy were severely distressed, and finally found it necessary to abandon their enterprise; but they were able to subsist some months upon what they found, for nothing escaped their search. The French soldiers had been so long accustomed to plunder, that they proceeded in their researches for booty of every kind upon a regular system. They were provided with tools for the work of pillage, and every piece of furniture in which places of concealment could be constructed they broke open from behind, so that no valuables could be hidden from them by any contrivance of that kind. Having satisfied themselves that nothing was secreted above ground, they proceeded to examine whether there was any new

masonry, or if any part of the cellar or ground-floor had been disturbed : if it appeared uneven, they dug there : where there was no such indication, they poured water, and if it were absorbed in one place faster than another, there they broke the earth. There were men who at the first glance could pronounce whether any thing had been buried beneath the soil, and when they probed with an iron rod, or, in default of it, with sword or bayonet, it was found that they were seldom mistaken in their judgement. The habit of living by prey called forth, as in beasts, a faculty of discovering it : there was one soldier whose scent became so acute, that if he approached the place where wine had been concealed, he would go unerringly to the spot.

But before supplies could be brought in by this marauding system, the distress which was felt in the invading army occasioned a considerable desertion. The more desperate deserters, instead of going over to the British lines, collected in strong parties in the country about Alcobaça, Nazaré, and As Caldas da Rainha, and at length formed themselves into a regular army of robbers, calling themselves the 11th corps, under their officers and general. When they fell in with a detachment of their countrymen, they compelled them to join with them, and in a short time their numbers amounted to more than 1600. The annoyance became at length more serious to Massena than to the Portuguese ; he sent two strong detachments

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*Deserters  
form them-  
selves into  
a corps of  
plunderers.*

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*State of  
Lisbon.*

against them, and it was not till after an obstinate action that they surrendered to a superior force, . . their leaders were then shot, and the men returned to a course of duty which differed very little from their predatory life.

There was necessarily great distress meantime at Lisbon, because so many families had taken refuge there in a state of destitution ; but that distress was alleviated by the care of the government, and by a religion in which alms-giving ranks high in the scale of religious works, and is enjoined as a regular compensation for sin. Thousands of these poor fugitives were hutted in the open country ; many were sent across the river, and they who came from those parts of the country which, by the recovery of Coimbra, were delivered from the French, returned home. Provisions were dear, but there was neither danger nor dread of famine. That country from which the capital receives all its garden produce was within the British lines ; on the other side the river Alentejo and Algarve were free from the enemy ; and the latter fertile province, with that part of the former which is considered as the granary of the south of Portugal, perfectly secure from them, unless the subjugation of the kingdom were effected. The Barbary coast was close at hand ; ships from America and England were daily arriving, and the supply of wheat was soon fully equal to the consumption of the army and of the increased population.

But the opposition writers in England en-

deavoured to raise an alarm, “that Lisbon, not Massena, was in danger of famine; he,” they said, “could drive in upon our lines the population of the surrounding country to increase our difficulties, and to relieve his own could send his foraging parties into an immense track of country as yet untouched. England, meantime, must send out not merely regiment after regiment, but cargo after cargo of grain throughout the winter; and what if the bar of the Tagus should be locked up by adverse winds? Massena, we might be sure, with the talents and prudence universally ascribed to him, did not act without a confident prospect of success. It had been said in the Gazette, that he possessed only the ground on which his army stood; this was an *erratum*, where for Massena we ought to read Wellington. Our situation in Portugal would become infinitely more disagreeable than his, even if he did not, bringing his whole force to bear on one, two, or three points, by his superior numbers thus concentrated, break the lines in which Lord Wellington’s army was so much drawn out. He would have the most productive part of the kingdom open to him; we should have only Lisbon and its vicinity, with the whole Portuguese army to maintain, as well as the British; nay, with the whole population of Lisbon, increased by the fugitives who had taken asylum there, deprived of their usual resources, and thrown upon us even for daily bread! What a delicate and irksome part

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the opposi-  
tion in  
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then would our troops have to support, if they were to pass the winter upon those mountains, possessing no part of Portugal but that in which they were posted, incessantly harassed by the French in their front, with a Portuguese army double their own number within their lines, and a starving metropolis in the rear? The French had obviously the advantage; they could remain in their post as long or as short a time as they pleased: they could retire and return at their discretion. They might wait for the reinforcements which the despot their master would draw to their aid from every quarter of subjected Europe: they were likely to accumulate, while the British must in the nature of things decrease.\* Massena was in truth master of the game he had to play. The most disastrous thing that could happen to us, next to positive defeat, would be the necessity of keeping our position on these heights for the winter; and we trust," said these hopeful directors of public opinion, "we trust that we shall not have to incur that calamity! Lord Wellington may re-embark his troops without much molestation; and rather than he should be driven to the necessity of continuing in these positions for the winter, we confess, we wish that he were re-embarked."

*General  
La Croix  
killed.*

The people of Lisbon had not been without some apprehension that the British government would withdraw, rather in hopelessness than in weakness, from the contest. The merchants,

therefore, had prepared to take flight, some for Brazil, others for England. But when they saw with what determination the lines were manned, this apprehension was laid aside; the fullest confidence succeeded, and all persons relied upon the skill of Lord Wellington, the strength of his position, and the discipline and courage of the allied armies. Such was the security which they felt behind his impregnable lines, that parties resorted to Alhandra for the sake of seeing them, as idlers flock from London to behold a review. A battalion of British seamen had been formed to serve in defending that part of the position. Land service was a jubilee to these men; they had the town of Alhandra to themselves, the inhabitants having forsaken it, and there those who were off guard sat in large armed chairs of embossed leather, two centuries old, smoking and drinking in the open streets. In reconnoitring this part of the line from the side of Villa Franca, General La Croix was killed by a shot from the water. Frequent skirmishes took place on the right flank and in the rear of the French encampment; but the piquets, by one of those agreements which mutual convenience will sometimes produce between enemies, did not fire upon each other, and this gave occasion for some of the old humanities of war. Some of our men even went and drank wine with the French, till an order was issued prohibiting a

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*Massena  
retreats  
from the  
lines.*

sort of intercourse which could neither with propriety nor safety be permitted.

Certain movements of the enemy seemed at this time to indicate an intention of crossing the Tagus. Laborde was sent to garrison Santarem. He threatened to destroy the little town of Chamusca on the Alentejo side (noted for its sweet wine), if the boats there were not sent over for his use: upon which the inhabitants burnt them. A detachment advanced toward Villa Velha, in hopes of winning the bridge there, but it had been removed in time. Abrantes secured the passage against them at one practicable point; and Major-General Fane was sent into Alentejo to observe the enemy at Santarem, with a sufficient force to defeat any attempt that might be made in that quarter. Meantime Massena's apparent inactivity was regarded with some wonder, and made the subject of pasquinades in his own army. Sickness and desertion were daily reducing his numbers; his only possibility of success depended upon effecting a plan of co-operation with Soult; but time must elapse before that could be attempted, and without reinforcements he could not maintain his ground in Portugal the while. For these he had applied pressingly, and having determined where to await them, and prepared accordingly, after remaining a month in front of the British lines, he broke up from his bivouac on the night of the 14th of November, for the

purpose of retiring into cantonments. The allies were immediately put in motion to follow him, but the movement was so ably conducted on the enemy's part, that not above 400 prisoners were taken during the retreat.

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Lord Wellington, not knowing what might be Massena's intention, could not pursue him with his whole force; Picton's division was retained in its station, in case the enemy should move round Monte Junto for the purpose of making an attack on that side; and Hill was sent across the Tagus with his corps, to protect Alentejo, and communicate with Abrantes, if that place should be attacked. With the remainder of the army Lord Wellington followed the French, and came up with them near Santarem, where they occupied a position strong in itself, and rendered formidable by retrenchments and abbattis. It was where the high road, which is in that place a raised causeway walled on either side, crosses a wide morass, through which the Rio Mayor makes its way to the Tagus. The approach was defended by breastworks and trees cut down, and the causeway was commanded from a hill, close to its termination on the Santarem side, by artillery, which would have swept its whole length. Demonstrations for attacking them were made, rather to ascertain whether a retreat from the country were intended, than with any intent of assailing a position so well chosen and secured. Had this indeed been seriously designed, the

Lord Wel-  
lington ad-  
vances to  
Santarem.

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*Both armies  
go into can-  
tonments.*

heavy rain which fell during the night, and rendered the fords of the Rio Mayor impassable, must have frustrated it. Perceiving that the enemy were in considerable force there, instead of being, as had been at first supposed, only the rear-guard, and having ascertained that Massena's purpose was to canton his troops in the finest part of that country, Lord Wellington retained only his light division in front of Santarem, and cantoned the army at Cartaxo (where his head-quarters were fixed), Azambuja, Alcoentre, Alenquer, and Villa Franca, from whence they might at any time fall back within their lines, if the enemy should receive such reinforcements as might render this expedient. Massena's head-quarters were first at Santarem, but he soon removed them to Torres Novas: Regnier was left at Santarem with his corps; Junot's was cantoned at Pernes; Ney's at Thomar, Torres Novas, and Punhete; the companies of artificers at Barquinha, and a reserve of cavalry at Ourem. In this state both armies prepared to pass the winter, both expecting reinforcements, and each ready to take advantage of any favourable opportunity that circumstances might present.

“If this,” said the despondents in England, “be termed the defence of a country, the Portuguese or any other people may well exclaim, God preserve us from such defenders!” “The campaign,” they predicted, “would be renewed in February, with such an accumulation of force

on the part of the enemy, as must make the protection even of Lisbon hopeless, much less the deliverance of the Peninsula." "They knew how galling it must be to the pride of the nation thus to be foiled, and thus, in expedition after expedition, to see the treasures and the blood of their countrymen squandered in vain ; but if the public would give confidence to men of shallow intellects, . . to men who, having no real stake in the country, submitted to execute the projects, however extravagant, of the Junta who had so long misguided us, . . they must bear the calamity and disgrace of constant miscarriage. It was a most erroneous view of British policy, to conceive that we could ever, with our limited population and commercial habits, become a military people ; and it would be just as rational for the French to strive to cope with us by sea, as for us to enter the lists with them by land. All that they now prayed for was, that our eyes might be at length opened to the true policy which we ought to pursue, that of retrieving our finances, and employing our resources upon objects truly British." This was the language of the opposition, and it excited now for the first time the fears of the English public, because circumstances as melancholy as they were unforeseen seemed to render it probable that they would soon have it in their power to act upon the principles which they professed.

Toward the latter end of October the Princess Amelia died, after a protracted and painful ill-  
*The King's illness.*

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ness, which she had endured with exemplary meekness and resignation. Aware of what must be its termination, she had some of her hair set in a ring, and one day when her blind father, making his daily visit, came to her bed-side, and held out his hand to her, she put this sad memorial upon his finger silently. Her dissolution occurred so soon afterwards, that she never knew the fatal consequences. The King had suffered intense anxiety during her illness, and when he felt this last indication of his daughter's love, feeling at the same time but too surely all that it implied, it affected him so strongly as to bring on the recurrence of a malady which had rendered the appointment of a regent necessary two-and-twenty years before. There was, however, good reason for hope, because the disease of mind was not constitutional and hereditary; they who had the best grounds for forming an opinion believed that its foundation was laid by extreme anxiety and consequent insomnolence during the latter years of the American war. The physicians confidently expected that it would prove of short continuance, and therefore parliament having met according to summons, adjourned for a fortnight without a dissentient voice. At the expiration of that term a second adjournment for a similar time was proposed, upon the same grounds, and carried against a small minority: that time also having elapsed, a report of the privy council was laid before parliament, containing the examination of the

King's physicians, all of whom declared it highly probable that he would recover. Upon this report the house adjourned for a third fortnight, but not without warm debate and a great increase of numbers to the minority. At the end of this third adjournment ministers informed parliament that although a considerable degree of progressive amendment had taken place, and the same confident hopes of ultimate recovery were still entertained, yet the immediate state of his Majesty's health was not such as could warrant them to propose a farther adjournment. It became necessary, therefore, to deliberate in what manner a regency should be formed.

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During the subsequent proceedings, ministers were accused in the most vehement language of flagrant usurpation, and of grossly violating the constitution. They were called a parcel of second-rate lawyers and needy adventurers, who in their desperate ambition cared not for the fate of the nation, so they could only contrive to keep their places and retain the command of the public purse. Their proceedings, it was said, were miserable shams and pretences, tending to inflict a mortal stab upon the constitution of the country, and to vest the government in an oligarchical House of Commons. Mr. Perceval would fain persuade that house to make him governor of the country, and let him put the crown in his pocket. Parliament, therefore, was exhorted to withdraw from ministers as speedily as possible the power which they enjoyed, for

*Proceed-  
ings con-  
cerning a  
regency.*

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the day of their dismissal, it was said, would be the best day England had ever seen. Among the evils which might be expected from the suspension of the executive power, it was urged that no assistance could be sent to Lord Wellington, no money drawn from the exchequer, however indispensable a supply might be at this time. Lord Holland dwelt upon this argument; to which Lord Liverpool replied, he was not aware of any injury to the public service from any such delay, nor that ministers had abstained from any acts, from which, under other circumstances, they would not have advised his Majesty to abstain. At whatever risk to themselves, he said, they would do that which they deemed most conducive to the safety, honour, and interest of the country, leaving it for the justice of parliament to consider of, and decide upon, the grounds of their justification. This reply was not received as it ought to have been. Lord Holland made answer, it was highly proper that indemnity should follow statesman-like measures, called for by necessity; but those who had assumed the functions of the executive power could not be entitled to indemnity for measures rendered necessary by a delay which they themselves had caused. And the Duke of Norfolk observed in the same tone, that if no inconvenience had resulted from the suspension of the executive power, then had ministers in effect taken the sovereignty into their own hands.

Upon this subject Mr. Perceval spoke with characteristic manliness. "We have not," said he, "been blind to these things. If ministers should find it necessary to take such steps, they would be justified under the particular circumstances of the case; but they would act under a heavy responsibility, and parliament would be bound in duty to examine their conduct afterwards. I am deeply convinced, that I stand in a situation of as deep responsibility as ever a minister stood in; a double responsibility, a responsibility to the public, and a responsibility to the King my master. I feel this to be our situation; and parliament must have felt it so too, in suffering the delays that have already taken place. Gentlemen opposite may put what construction they please upon what I am about to say; but I do contend boldly before parliament, and before my country, that if, under these circumstances, any measure, in any of the public departments, required the sign manual, the officer at the head of that department would act most culpably if he did not issue the necessary orders to his inferior upon his responsibility. This is the view I have of the situation and of the duties of his Majesty's ministers; and although gentlemen on the other side have thought proper to insinuate that our measures have been influenced by a desire of retaining our offices, I am sure the house will not be of opinion that our situation is particularly enviable, or one that could by any possibility be an object of choice.

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Mr. Perceval.



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We feel . . we admit . . all the inconvenience of the present state of things ; but, considering the duration to be but short, are they in any degree equal to the inconvenience of appointing another person to execute the functions of the sovereign ; or, in other words, of appointing a regent, unless the necessity of the case absolutely requires it ? It is not from feelings of delicacy only that his Majesty's ministers have acted, but from the conviction that the preserving to his Majesty the power of exercising his authority immediately upon his recovery, without the interruption of a regent, would be a great national advantage. The regent, when appointed, would of course act as he thought best for the interests of the state ; and even admitting that the plans which he would adopt would be better than those now pursued, yet I contend, that this change from a bad to a better system, with the probability of again shortly recurring to the old system, would be much more injurious to the welfare of the public, than the inconveniences which have been so strongly urged by the gentlemen on the other side of the house.

“ The delay which has taken place has been no covert delay : it has been perfectly open, and the reason why it was asked was fairly stated. We have had no disguise, no subterfuge ; our object was broadly and fairly stated to parliament. Sir, I say again, that ministers feel deeply the heavy responsibility of their situation : they know that their conduct will neces-

sarily be examined and scrutinized by parliament; they know that they may have to request justice from parliament for their conduct, at a time when those who are now censuring their conduct with so much acrimony may possess a greater sway than they do at present. Is such a situation, then, a desirable one? Is it an object of ambition? Is it possible that any man, or set of men, can covet such a situation, or wish to retain it, except from the imperious sense of the duty which they owe to their sovereign and to their country? That duty I will perform to the best of my humble abilities, and cheerfully submit my conduct to the justice of parliament and of my country.

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“It has been asked, whether, if under the present circumstances the evacuation of Portugal were deemed necessary, any order could be sent out to Lord Wellington for that purpose? And do gentlemen really believe that any difficulty exists upon such a subject? Do they really believe that Lord Wellington would refuse to obey an order transmitted to him, by his Majesty’s secretary of state, for that purpose, merely because he had heard of the King’s indisposition? Undoubtedly they do not: the case they have put is then an imaginary one. . . Sir, in the office which I have the honour to hold, money must be taken out of the Exchequer for the public service; it is the bounden duty of ministers to see that service performed; and do the honourable gentlemen opposite think that I

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would hesitate to draw the money for that purpose?" . . . At this a loud cry of Hear! hear! was raised from the opposition benches. . . "Sir," pursued Mr. Perceval, "I am unable to account for the distinction which the gentlemen opposite appear to me to make between the two cases which I have put. When I said that ministers would not hesitate to give orders for the evacuation of Portugal, if it were deemed necessary, they seemed, by their silence at least, to acquiesce in what I said; but when I spoke of applying the money voted for the public service to the public service, they affect great astonishment, as if the principle of the two cases was not the same. But do they think that where money has been voted by parliament, and ordered by parliament to be applied to a particular service, that I would hesitate to have that public service performed, for fear of the responsibility that would attach to me? Do they think that I would endanger the best interests of the country, from any consideration of personal danger to myself? Do they think that I would risk a mutiny in the army or the navy, rather than take upon me the responsibility of issuing their pay? No, sir, if I could be guilty of such conduct, I should be unfit indeed for the situation which I hold! I should be guilty of a base dereliction of my duty to my sovereign and my country!"

*Troops sent  
to Portugal.*

This was no empty language; and however the manly appeal might be lost upon those per-

sons to whom it was immediately addressed, it was not lost upon the people of England. The ministers, with a spirit which alone might be sufficient to atone for all their errors, and entitle them to the lasting gratitude of these kingdoms, had ordered off reinforcements to Lord Wellington, on their own responsibility, at a crisis when they held their power by so precarious a tenure, that it was not unlikely their successors' orders for the evacuation of Portugal might be upon the seas at the same time. For that this was the policy which the opposition intended to pursue, if, as they now fully expected, they were to be invested with power, was what they themselves avowed. Issues of money also became necessary for the army and navy: money had been appropriated by parliament for these services; but the exchequer act requires that the issue should be under the great seal, or under the privy seal, or by authority of an act of parliament. Mr. Perceval thought that under the existing circumstances it would be proper to use the privy seal: the keeper of the privy seal was willing to take upon himself this responsibility; but the signature of Mr. Larpent, clerk of the privy seal, was likewise necessary, and that gentleman refused to affix it, pleading scruples on account of his oath of office. Mr. Perceval upon this issued an order from the Treasury to the Exchequer, deeming this sufficient, and thinking also that it was better for the responsible ser-

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quired.*

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Lord Gren-  
ville as Au-  
ditor of the  
Exchequer.*

vants of the crown to risk the censure, or wait the indemnity of parliament, than to procrastinate public business, by bringing such topics into discussion in the house from time to time.

But when these warrants were brought to Lord Grenville, in his capacity of Auditor of the Exchequer, he returned an answer to Mr. Perceval, requiring time "to consider the nature and extent of the duties which this new and unexpected course of proceeding imposed upon him;" and therefore requesting to know when it was necessary that the money should be issued. He was informed, "that, according to the usual course of supplying the weekly issues to the navy and army, it would be necessary that sums should be issued for both services, beyond the amount of the existing credit at the exchequer, either on the morrow, or the next day at farthest; but if an actual issue could be made within six days, no serious inconvenience was apprehended." Lord Grenville then desired that the opinions of the Attorney and Solicitor General should be taken. These law officers pronounced, that they "did not think the warrant of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury was in law a sufficient authority imperative upon the Auditor, nor, consequently, a legal sanction for his proceeding to obey the same; nor that any discretion was left to him by the law on this occasion, for the exercise of which he would not be responsible." The Lords Commissioners of the Treasury trans-

mitted this opinion to Lord Grenville, informing him at the same time "that their sense of the mischief to the public service, which would arise if any delay should take place, appeared to render it indispensable that the warrants should be forthwith complied with, and that they were consequently ready to take upon themselves the responsibility of any act which might be essential for that purpose." Lord Grenville. replied, that it was matter of the deepest concern to him to be made the involuntary cause of any, even the shortest delay, in an issue of his Majesty's treasury, stated to him from such high authority to be important to the public service. "If," said he, "I could be satisfied of the propriety of my doing what is required, there is no personal responsibility which I would not readily incur for the public interests ; but I cannot persuade myself, that I could obey those warrants, without a breach of my official duty in that point, which is above all others peculiarly obligatory on the person placed in the situation of Auditor of the Exchequer ; nor without a high and criminal violation both of a positive statute, and also of the essential principles of our monarchical and parliamentary constitution.

"I am told," he continued, "that I must act on my own discretion, for the exercise of which I must alone be responsible. This responsibility, if it legally attaches upon me, I

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certainly cannot transfer to any other persons, and least of all to your lordships, whatever willingness you have expressed to take it on yourselves. My attempting to do so would itself be criminal ; tending to confound the official relations in which I have the honour to stand towards your lordships, and to annul those checks which the law has established for ensuring the faithful discharge of our respective duties, and thereby the security of the public treasure. But I beg leave humbly to submit to your lordships, that the law has in truth invested me with no discretion on this subject. The exigencies of the public service, which your lordships have condescended to detail to me in these your warrants, are matters of state, of which, as Auditor of the Exchequer, I have no knowledge, and can take no cognizance ; my official duty is strictly limited to an observance of the accustomed forms of the exchequer, and of the laws which have from time to time been passed for its regulation. To these I am bound to adhere ; and it is on the fullest consideration which this pressure of time has permitted me to give them, that I am compelled to decline, but with all due respect to your lordships, a compliance with the requisition contained in those warrants, to which this letter refers.” His lordship concluded, by recommending that the difficulty should be submitted to the consideration of the two houses of parliament, with whom

rested the right and duty to provide the means of removing it, and to whose pleasure he would defer with entire submission.

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Mr. Perceval immediately laid this correspondence before parliament, saying, “that, *Jan. 3.* though, if it had not been for the difficulty thus unexpectedly started, he should not have thought it expedient to bring the subject under their immediate notice, yet he had always anticipated it as his duty to submit it to their consideration, not for the purpose of obtaining a previous vote of indemnity, but, having incurred the responsibility of action, with the view of calling on the house to determine whether or not ministers had acted justifiably.” He now moved a resolution, that the Lords of the Treasury should issue their warrants for the payment of such sums as were necessary, and that the Auditors and officers of the Exchequer should obey those warrants. In the course of the debate he noticed the argument, that public inconvenience was now proved to have arisen from the delay occasioned by adjournments. “We have,” said he, “this marked, monstrous, abominable, and aggravated case before us, . . . and what is it? what is this great public inconvenience? Why, that ministers have found it necessary to come to parliament to authorize the issue of money, for services for which that very money has been appointed!”

The resolution passed without a division; but, in the Upper House, twenty Peers, among whom



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were all the Royal Dukes, protested against it ; because, they said, the principle on which it was founded would justify the assumption of all the executive power of the crown by the two houses of parliament, during any suspension of the personal exercise of the royal authority. This business attracted more notice than it otherwise would have done, because, upon Lord Grenville's accession to the first place in the ministry after the death of Mr. Pitt, a bill had been passed, empowering him to hold at the same time the offices of First Lord of the Treasury and Auditor of the Exchequer ; offices which, it was argued in support of the bill, might without inconvenience be held by the same person. The imprudence of bringing thus to recollection a measure, which at the time had called forth strong animadversions, did not tend to lessen the unpopularity of Lord Grenville and the coalition with which he acted.

*State of the  
opposition.*

That party fully expected their return to power. They were strong in borough influence, while Mr. Perceval, owing to the course which he pursued concerning the regency, lost the support of those members of the royal family who had been most closely connected with their father's government. Their journalists were numerous and active, and they depended upon the Prince's favour. But though all the various sects and subdivisions of opposition had united in one cry against the king's ministers, there were too many points of difference between them to be

easily accommodated. On the question of what is insidiously termed catholic emancipation they were agreed ; but only on that question : the Grenvilles were at variance with all their allies upon the subject of parliamentary reform, and the reformists were at variance among themselves as to the nature and extent of their proposed reformation. The war also was another ground of dissension. One party would have sacrificed our allies, our interest, and our honour, for the sake of obtaining vile popularity, by concluding a nominal and deceitful peace. They saw no difficulty in accommodating our differences with all our enemies ; according to them, their country was in the wrong upon every disputed point ; we had therefore only to concede every thing to America, and suffer Buonaparte, without farther opposition, to govern Spain and Portugal in his own way : then we might have illuminations for a definitive treaty, transparencies of Peace and Plenty, and quartern loaves and pewter pots carried in jubilant procession, in honour of the reduced prices of bread and porter. This would have been the foreign policy of the radical reformers ; that of Lord Grenville and the despondents would have been equally ruinous ; believing it impossible that we could resist the military power of France, and yet knowing that peace would be only a snare, they would have carried on a timid defensive war, without the hope or the possibility of bringing it to a glorious termination. Lord

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Holland, on the contrary, would have acted with additional vigour in aid of Spain ; in this he would have been supported by Earl Moira and Mr. Sheridan, and perhaps by the Marquis of Lansdowne and Mr. Ponsonby.

*Their ex-  
pectations.*

The hopes, however, of the opposition were raised to the highest pitch, and their partizans scarcely even attempted to conceal their joy at an event, which, as they fully expected, was to restore them to their places. The disposition of the Prince was well known to be favourable to these hopes : he had a personal regard for some of the leaders of the party, and it was believed that many of his political opinions had been imbibed from Mr. Fox. It was therefore probable that a change of ministry would take place ; and all the opponents of government, however greatly they differed among themselves as to their ultimate objects, from the regular opposition, under Lords Grey and Grenville, down to the very dregs of the revolutionary faction, vied with each other in exulting over a falling enemy.

*Language  
of the  
anarchists.*

Two years before the King's illness, one of their journalists had said, that " of all monarchs, since the revolution, the successor of George III. would have the finest opportunity of becoming nobly popular." This sentence, connected as it was with the anticipation of " a crowd of blessings that might be bestowed upon the country, in the event of a total change of system," had unwisely been selected for pro-

secution by Sir Vicary Gibbs, and the defendants were of course acquitted. Such language was perfectly consistent in the Foxites; but in the mouths of the anarchists, the flattery which was now used toward the Prince appeared not a little extraordinary. "Never," they said, "was there so fair an opportunity for producing a great and salutary effect, as the Prince now had. We want a change of the whole system, a radical and a sweeping change of it; and it is because we hope that such a change would be the consequence of giving full powers to the Prince, that we wish to see full powers given to him. Is not the Prince of Wales as likely to be able to judge of political systems as his father, . . . afflicted as the latter unhappily has been in more ways than one, and bent down with age as he now is? Is not the Prince as likely to be able to choose proper advisers as his father was, or ever can be? Why then should powers, of any sort, belonging to the kingly office, be withheld from him? I know it has been said, that we are *bidding* for the Prince; and who can bid above us? We have to offer him *hearts*, and *sinews*, and *lives*, if he needs them, and we ask for nothing but our well-known rights in return. We want to strip him of nothing. We grudge him and his family nothing that the constitution awards them, or that they could ever wish for, in the way of splendour. All we have to beseech of him is, that he will resolve to be the ruler of a free people, and not the leader of a

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faction." . . "His succession to power," we were told by another of these journalists, "with such opportunities before him, and at so momentous a time, appeared a lot so enviable, that it might turn philosophy itself into ambition. Hitherto he had been seated in that domestic privacy, which he had learnt how to value and dignify. And so wonderfully had past circumstances held back the cause of radical reform, and so favourable for it were the present, that Fate seemed purposely to have reserved the amiable task for his royal highness, that with one restoring breath he might melt away the accumulated oppressions of half a century."

The wishes of this party concerning the King's resumption of authority were sufficiently expressed. They told us, it was exposing the government to the contempt of foreign powers, to have a person at the head of affairs who had long been incapable of signing his name to a document, without some one to guide his hand; a person long incapable of receiving petitions, of even holding a levee, or discharging the most ordinary functions of his office; and now, too, afflicted with this mental malady! They cited cases to show how doubtful and precarious were the appearances of recovery from mental derangement; observed that persons having been so afflicted were easily hurried, and inferred that a man subject to hurries was not fit to wield the executive power. When they were charged by their opponents with thus disclosing a de-

termination, that if they acceded to power the King should never resume his functions, the manner in which the charge was repelled was such as confirmed it. "Every one," they said, "expresses regret that the King, or that any other human being, should be afflicted with blindness. But old age is old age, and blindness is blindness, in a King as well as in other men; and when blindness is unhappily added to old age, and to both are added *mental derangement*, is it unreasonable that people whose happiness or misery must, in a great degree, depend upon their government, should be solicitous that *great caution* should be used in the resumption of the royal authority by a person thus afflicted?" . . . "Throw him into a corner!" exclaimed a ministerial writer, when he exposed with indignation the wishes of this party; "tell him, this is the lot reserved for a king who has reigned so long!" The reply to this was any thing rather than a confutation or denial of the charge. "We have had nothing to do with the *lot*," said a mouthpiece of the anarchists; "we have had no hand in making the King either old, or blind, or mentally deranged. The *lot* has fallen upon him. The first is the lot of every man, and is generally esteemed a very fortunate lot; the second is nothing very rare, and it is by no means an unfrequent companion of old age; and the third, and all three, are the work of nature, and not of any of us. And as to the King's having reigned so long, there is neither

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*Mr. Perceval popular  
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merit nor demerit in that, either in him or his people.”

Whether the agitators and anarchists really believed that the Prince could be so infatuated as to countenance their plans for a radical and sweeping change, . . . or whether they held out this hope to their dupes and disciples, in order that their certain disappointment might engender a deadlier disaffection, is best known to themselves ; but if, abstaining from their indecent attempts to show that the King ought never to be permitted to resume his authority, they had talked of no other reform than that of curtailing the power of what they called the borough-mongering faction, there never was a time when the better part of the people would have been so well inclined to listen to their arguments. Mr. Perceval had never stood so high in public estimation as at this moment. When first he came into power, the tide of popularity was in favour of him and his colleagues : because any men would have been popular who succeeded to the administration which was then displaced ; but a series of untoward events had for a time lessened his hold upon the country, without in any degree diminishing the general dislike with which his opponents were regarded. The unhappy expedition to Walcheren drew after it a cry of grief and disappointment, against which, perhaps, he could scarcely have borne up, if Sir Francis Burdett, by a factious dispute with the House of Commons, had not,

most unintentionally, but most effectually, drawn off the public attention at the very moment when the decision upon the inquiry came on. It was always asserted by his enemies, that he held his situation, not through any weight of influence in the country, nor of talents in parliament, but through the confidence and especial favour of the King; and that nothing could be more unfit than that the British prime minister should be thus dependent upon, and literally, as it were, the servant of the crown. They who argued thus against Mr. Perceval's administration did not perceive how strong an argument they supplied against that system, to which they themselves owed their only power; certain, however, it is, that Mr. Perceval was thought a weak minister, because he wanted that influence; and a sense of this weakness seems sometimes to have made him assent to measures which he would gladly have prevented, if he had held his situation by a stronger tenure. But when the prop upon which he really had leaned, and by which it was believed that he was entirely supported, was suddenly taken away, then it was that he felt his own resources, and the people saw him confident in his motives and measures, and with the strength of integrity hold on his steady course; not to be deterred from what he knew to be his duty, either by the clamours and threats of the faction within doors, and the demagogues without; nor by the expressed displeasure of the Prince, in

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whose power it would presently be to dismiss him from office. Then, perhaps, for the first time, he became conscious of his own powers, and the dignity of his nature shone forth; it was seen that the man, whose individual character was without a spot, carried the pure principles of his privacy into public action, and possessed the steadiness and intrepidity of a statesman in as eminent a degree as the milder and most endearing virtues of domestic life. Mr. Perceval never held so high a place in public opinion as the favoured minister of the King, in full and secure possession of power, as now, when he was only the faithful servant of a master who was no longer sensible of his services, and no longer capable of supporting him.

*Schemes  
for a new  
ministry.*

Accustomed as the various members of opposition were to coalitions, and compromises, and concessions, it was no easy task to form a coherent ministry out of such heterogeneous elements. At the very commencement of the arrangements, Lords Grey and Grenville could not accord, and the Earl left town in disgust; they found it, however, expedient to agree, and he returned in time to give counsel when the Prince had to answer the proposed restrictions sent to him by parliament. It is said that the answer which these lords had advised was shown by the Prince to Mr. Sheridan, and that Mr. Sheridan declared it would prove of the most pernicious consequences, inasmuch as it could hardly fail to involve the Prince in a dispute

with the House of Commons. This opinion was followed, and the answer which was delivered was composed according to Mr. Sheridan's counsel. The two leading opposition lords were offended at this, and intimated, that as his Royal Highness had not deemed it proper to adopt their advice, they could not be of any service to him in the intended arrangement. The Prince upon this requested Lord Holland to form an administration; but Lord Holland had no influence, and was utterly unable to ensure majorities. The Prince, therefore, who now began to feel the difficulties of government, was driven back to Lords Grey and Grenville, and a temporary conciliation took place. The triumph of the opposition seemed now to be complete; they thought the field was their own, and that nothing remained but to distribute the spoils. This distribution, however, excited claims and contentions, of which the Prince heard more than he liked.

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When the time of the regency drew near, Mr. Perceval waited on the King at Windsor, and found him well enough to converse upon public affairs, though not sufficiently recovered to bear the weight of business. He inquired anxiously concerning the Prince's conduct, and expressed great joy at finding that he had not thrown himself entirely into the hands of a party who were directly hostile to all the measures of his father's government; and he desired that the Queen would write to the Prince, to signify this appro-

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opinion  
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*The Prince  
Regent an-  
nounces his  
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bation, and to request that he might not be harassed on his return to society by having to change an ephemeral administration. The Prince, it is said, was well pleased to be thus relieved from the difficulties in which he found himself involved by jarring opinions and contending claims. He made known his determination of making no change to the opposition; and on the day before the regency bill passed, he officially acquainted Mr. Perceval that it was his intention not to remove from their stations those whom he found there as the King's official servants. "At the same time," said he, "the Prince owes it to the truth and sincerity of character, which, he trusts, will appear in every action of his life, explicitly to declare, that the impulse of filial duty and affection to his beloved and afflicted father leads him to dread that any act of the Regent might, in the smallest degree, have the effect of interfering with the progress of his Sovereign's recovery. This consideration alone dictates the decision now communicated to Mr. Perceval. Having thus performed an act of indispensable duty, from a just sense of what is due to his own consistency and honour, the Prince has only to add, that, among the many blessings to be derived from his Majesty's restoration to health, and to the personal exercise of his royal functions, it will not, in the Prince's estimation, be the least, that that most fortunate event will at once rescue him from a situation of unexampled embarrassment, and

put an end to a state of affairs ill calculated, he fears, to sustain the interests of the united kingdom in this awful and perilous crisis, and most difficult to be reconciled to the genuine principles of the British constitution."

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Mr. Perceval replied, that, in the expression of the Prince's anxiety for the speedy restoration of his father's health, he and his colleagues could see nothing but additional motives for their most anxious exertions to give satisfaction to his Royal Highness, in the only manner in which it could be given, by endeavouring to promote his views for the security and happiness of the country. "Mr. Perceval," he continued, "has never failed to regret the impression of your Royal Highness with regard to the provisions of the regency bill, which his Majesty's servants felt it to be their duty to recommend to parliament. But he ventures to submit to your Royal Highness, that, whatever difficulties the present awful crisis of the country and the world may create in the administration of the executive government, your Royal Highness will not find them in any degree increased by the temporary suspension of the exercise of those branches of the royal prerogative which has been introduced by parliament, in conformity to what was intended on a former similar occasion; and that whatever ministers your Royal Highness might think proper to employ, would find in that full support and countenance, which, as long as they were honoured with your Royal Highness's com-

*Mr. Perceval's reply.*

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mands, they would feel confident they would continue to enjoy, ample and sufficient means for enabling your Royal Highness effectually to maintain the great and important interests of the united kingdom. And Mr. Perceval humbly trusts, that, whatever doubts your Royal Highness may entertain with respect to the constitutional propriety of the measures which have been adopted, your Royal Highness will feel assured, that they could not have been recommended by his Majesty's servants, nor sanctioned by parliament, but upon the sincere, though possibly erroneous, conviction, that they in no degree trenched upon the true principles and spirit of the constitution."

The opposition had made so sure of coming into power, that they let the list of their intended arrangement get abroad; "an arrangement," they told us, "of one united, compact body of men, all holding the same principles, and all animated by the same views; and an administration," they added, "of more internal strength, by the ties of mutual friendship, . . of more public influence, by talents, integrity, and stake in the country, never had been submitted to any Prince." A meeting of the common council was called by their city partizans, to prepare an address of congratulation to the Regent upon the change of men and measures which he was about to make. Their disappointment was in proportion to their hopes; they affirmed, however, that the Prince's determination would be

received with real satisfaction by the friends of Lords Grey and Grenville, who must all feel that nothing but a sense of imperious duty could have induced them to undertake the irksome and arduous task of office in such times. "Three months," they said, "had already elapsed under a total suspension of the functions of government, . . . three months the most important, perhaps, that had ever occurred in our history ; another month must have been added to the delay, if the Prince had yielded to his patriotic sentiments, and recurred all at once to the principles upon which he thought the administration would be most beneficially conducted. Thus much time must have been required for the re-election of those who would have vacated their seats, and for the re-establishment of the routine of office ; but this delay might certainly, in a moment of such emergency, be productive of the most serious evil." But while the Whigs thus affected the language of resignation, the radical journalists declared, "that a ministry formed by the two joint opposition lords would have excluded almost all the Prince's friends ; that from those lords the people could have expected nothing ; but that they would have hoped for something from an arrangement that should have placed Lord Holland at the head of affairs, to the great mortification of those less popular and less liberal leaders. It was as well to retain Perceval and Liverpool, as to supersede them by Grey and Grenville." Whigs and anarchists, how-

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